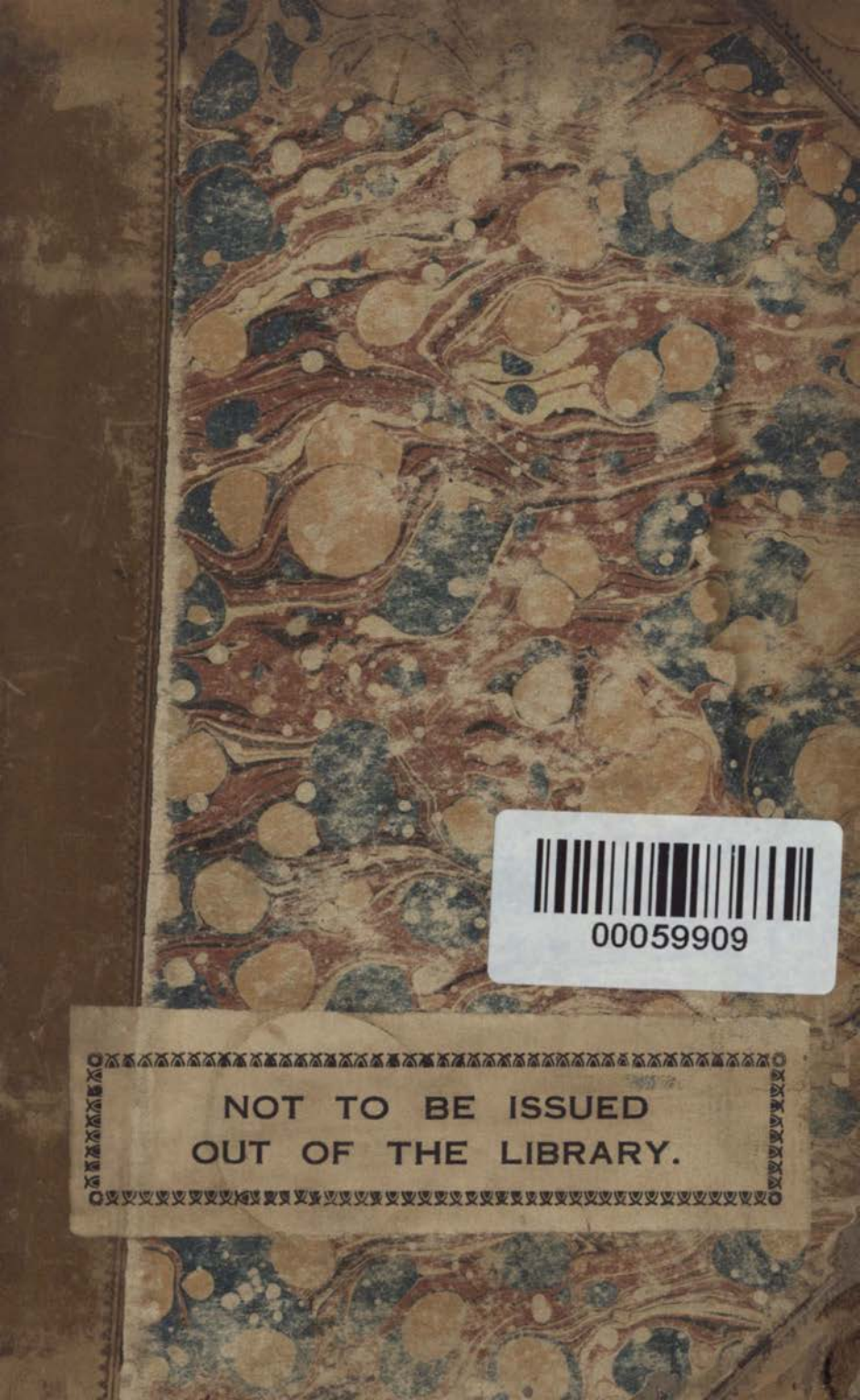
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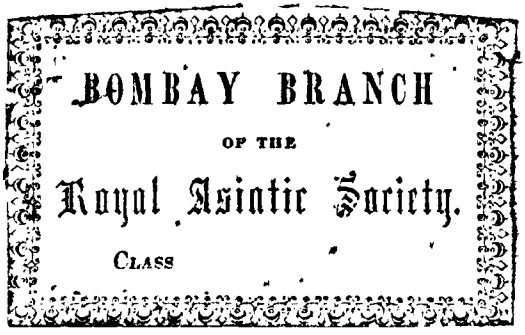

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THE

LIGHT OF NATURE

PURSUED.

By ABRAHAM TUCKER, Esq.

59909

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

SIR H. P. ST. JOHN MILDMAY, BART. M.P.

COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1852.

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THE

LIGHT OF NATURE PURSUED.

LIGHTS OF NATURE AND GOSPEL BLENDED

CHAP. I.

PARTITION OF THE GENERAL RULE.

NATURE has given to each species of animals some distinguishing power or quality for their preservation and entertainment. The lion lives by his courage: the elephant by his strength: the swine by his sturdiness. The squirrel delights in his agility: the swallow in the strength and swiftness of his wing. The spider seeks his maintenance from his cunning: the bee from her industry. The nation of flies and little fishes, artless and defenceless, exposed for a prey to all other creatures, subsist by their prolificness, multiplying them in greater numbers than all other creatures can destroy. To man she has given understanding to supply the want of strength, robustness, agility, and sagacity of instinct, wherein he falls short of his brother animals: and to make the qualities he finds in them subservient to his own uses. Therefore our understanding is the faculty it behoves us most sedulously to cultivate, because from that we may principally expect to receive a supply of our uses and enjoyments.

Yet we need not too much despise our fellow-creatures for the want of it: for we cannot enter into their ideas, nor know for certain whether their lives do not pass as pleasurably as our own. We know our pains are doubled by reflection, and perhaps it does not add much to our pleasures, which are made thereby to satiate the sooner: if we have funds of entertainment unknown to them, we have likewise many sources of disquietude and anxiety in our consciousness and foresight, from which they are exempt: nor have there been those wanting among us who have acknowledged they passed happier days while children or schoolboys, than they ever tasted among the fruits of reason when ripened to full maturity. One thing we may rest assured of, that nature being established in perfect wisdom, assigns to every creature the faculties and powers suitable to its station: so that all alike perform their part in the public services of the universe.

Neither would it do us any good, nor ought it to give us any pleasure, if we could prove the condition of other animals ever so wretched and despicable: for our happiness is to be estimated by the quantity we possess, not by the proportion it bears to that of other creatures. If their condition any ways affects us, it should be by the goodness of it; which will naturally incline us to think the most favourable of them possible. For as our heavenly Father displays his goodness by giving the young ravens their food when they cry, so we shall best display our own by rejoicing that they have

their food when they cry for it: for the prospect of good and enjoyment anywhere is a feast to the rightly-turned mind. Therefore instead of delighting to draw comparisons between ourselves and the irrational tribes, or studying to exaggerate our own nobility and pre-eminence of privileges above them, we should better imitate the most perfect of all beings by entertaining a good will and favourable inclination towards them; which would keep our ears open to whatever can be suggested for their advantage, and make us even wish they might inherit a portion in futurity, if any solid argument can be brought in support of it.

Nevertheless, as water supplies breath to fishes, and hay nourishes the cattle, yet are unfit for the respiration and sustenance of man wherefore we choose the fresh air and wholesome food; not because a nobler kind of support, but because better suited to our constitution; so let us avail ourselves of our rational faculty, not for the pride of its superior excellence, but for its being more particularly adapted to our uses. For sense and appetite may prove infallible guides to the species put under their direction, yet would perpetually lead us astray: and nastiness, however giving a real enjoyment to the swine, perhaps greater than we find in our perfumes, or even in the contemplation of our sciences, would fill us with disorder and loathing. So that without thinking anything contemptible in itself wherever nature has placed it, we may despise bestial appetites as ignoble and unworthy of us, because we have another faculty we may employ to higher uses and nobler advantages than we can receive from them. Thus it becomes our glory to improve our understanding, to raise it above the mire of appetite and passion, and approach as near as our capacities will permit to that openness and largeness of mind we believe belonging to superior orders of Being.

2. But as man differs from beasts in the faculty of understanding, so does one man differ from another in the degrees of his faculty. Yet he that possesses a large share need not think himself more highly favoured by Heaven, nor despise his weaker brother upon that account; for his talents are given him for the public service, so that others have an interest in them equally with himself: nor can we doubt that Providence dispenses to every one the qualifications proper for performing the part he has to act, and which rightly employed may be productive of happiness, the only thing that makes all other possessions valuable. Therefore let every one, according as provided by nature or education with the means of cultivating his understanding, improve it to the greatest height he can attain, as the task peculiarly assigned him, deeming it ignoble and unbecoming to stand at a lower pitch: yet without thinking meanly of others who are called to other duties. For true honour results, not from the talents we possess, nor the part allotted us, but from the manner of our employing them, and the justness of our action.

But the improvement of understanding goes on by slow degrees, and the first advances towards it are made by laying in a stock of materials, whose uses we are to find out after we have secured the possession of them. Hence comes the desire of knowledge which the inquisitive mind thirsts after, even in matters of curiosity and speculation; as not knowing what real benefit may be afterwards stricken out of them. Besides, the work of science being large, requires many labourers to take in hand the several parts of it: so that a man has a chance of being useful by making discoveries whereof he can find no use, because the materials he furnishes may be turned to good advantage by somebody else. Nevertheless, use being the proper end of knowledge, it behoves us to turn our inquiries into the way that

may lead to something profitable: leaving nothing to other hands that we are capable of executing ourselves.

Upon this principle I have endeavoured to conduct myself in the two former volumes: wherein how much soever dealing in matters of curiosity and novelty, I have all along had real benefit in view; and have passed over several curious subjects occurring upon the way, because they seemed unavailing to the main purpose. It having been my intention to draw up such a scheme of nature and the fundamentals of natural religion, founded upon the basis of experience and observations resulting therefrom, as might appear compact and consistent throughout to the studious and dispassionate; yet I do not present it as convenient for common use, nor deny that it may contain some parts disgustful, or even dangerous to common apprehensions; therefore since I cannot content myself with doing a little service while there seems a possibility of doing more, I shall now apply my attention to general convenience, and endeavour to produce something wherein the plain man may find his account: yet striving if possible so to connect my following labours with the foregoing that the studious and clear-sighted shall not take exceptions against them.

3. We have seen that sense and appetite are the first springs of action, impelling to objects that have been found grateful and driving from the contrary. In process of time, as experience grows to maturity, it produces the passions, affections, and habitual desires; which have something pleasing or disagreeable to sense for their object, and urge to the means apprehended requisite for procuring or escaping it. These incentives are given to all animals to spur on their activity, and find it continual employment: whence it appears that present pleasure and gratification are the natural motives to action. But besides these, man possesses the faculty of understanding, which presents a large scene of objects to his view: so that while appetite and sense are busied in their present pursuits, he can contemplate the remote consequences of measures, and make an estimate of their whole amount.

Hence arises a new object of pursuit, which is Good, commonly distinguished from pleasure, yet differing rather in quantity than kind: for good, as Mr. Locke observes, is that which produces pleasure, and this pleasure must come to be present some time or other, or it will not deserve the name. Thus pleasure and gratification still remain the motive even of rational undertakings; but the greater distant enjoyment in preference to the less near at hand. Nevertheless, man partakes so much of the beast as that his active powers lie constantly under the guidance of appetite and desire: wherefore it avails nothing for reason to discern what is good, unless she can raise such a desire as shall find gratification in the approach towards it, or vexation in the apprehension of missing it.

Now reason has in some measure a power to raise such desires: for by often figuring the distant good as present in imagination, she may at length bring desire to fasten upon certain rules and measures of conduct leading towards it; and thereby generate a new set of senses, usually styled the moral: which, when fully acquired, operate in the same manner with the natural; by impulse to present gratification of them, without regard to further good effects that first gave them their vigour. But men fall into mistakes concerning their moral senses, by entertaining too high an opinion of their understanding: for they suppose it able upon every occasion to penetrate the bottom of their measures, and discern the grounds whereon they were undertaken; so finding no inducement beyond the recommendation of the moral sense, they imagine this a notice given immediately by nature, like

those of colours, sounds, and tastes, conveyed by the bodily senses. But our understanding, scarce ever capable of looking through the whole length of the line she has run, rests upon certain marks and conclusions, without discerning the reasons prevailing on her to establish them. And if the major part of mankind never worked them out by their own observation and reason, still they derived them by the channels of instruction, example, and custom: but whoever first introduced them into the world, learned their value by having experienced the necessity and expedience of them. Most of our moral senses relate to our intercourse among one another: for as we live in society, we cannot attain our own interests without gaining the assistance and good will of others, which can only be done by returns of mutual good offices to them.

Thus we see the foundation of social virtues lies in our own good: and while we confined our contemplation to this sublunary scene of life, we could not find they had this foundation to support them in some cases that might happen, which therefore remained as exceptions to their obligation. But the sequel of our inquiries having discovered to us our individuality and unperishable nature, it appeared that we had an interest in futurity, and became expedient to examine whether that interest might not stand affected by the practice of the social virtues; so that they might still have their proper foundation to support them, even in cases where they tend to our damage in this present life.

We then cast our eyes around upon external nature, which soon led us to the author of nature, whom we found to be One, Omnipotent, Good, and Equitable. From whence it followed that the universe, being the work of one hand, must be formed upon one all-comprehensive plan: the several parts being mutually adjusted, so as to compose altogether one entire Whole; and the laws provided for each particular district, having a respect to the general utility.

We considered likewise that all causes must derive their powers and manners of operation originally from the first; whose omniscience would not permit him to be ignorant of the particular effects they should produce, nor to put them in motion without a design of producing the very effects to result therefrom. Thus all events fall out according to the causes appointed by God; and that provision of causes he makes for bringing them to pass, we call Providence, which extends throughout all the regions of his boundless empire. So that no creature in all nature receives a pleasure unless by the divine dispensation, nor falls under a pain unless by the divine permission.

Then upon contemplation of the divine equity, we could find no ground to imagine the stream of bounty should flow unequally: but that however it might appear confined to particular quarters at times, yet upon the whole it would be distributed in like proportion among all the creatures. Thus the good of every creature, being the share belonging to it of the whole good in the creation, cannot be promoted otherwise than by increasing the common stock. So that though private interest be the ultimate end of action; yet it is so covered by the general interest, that whoever takes his aim at the latter, cannot fail of hitting the former: and whoever aims aside the one, though he may fancy himself gaining a little present advantage, will find in the long run he has missed the other.

3. Thus we have gotten a fundamental rule of reason to be the groundwork of all our schemes and deliberations, namely, the increase of happiness in nature; but it is neither necessary nor feasible that this rule should

actuate us in all our motions: for though the wise man will act always conformably to rule, he need not act always by rule, because when his appetites happen to take the right turn of themselves, there is no occasion for applying any rule to direct them. We have natural appetites given to instigate us in pursuing the means of our security, preservation, and enjoyment: we have derivative desires, either imbibed from other persons, or acquired by our own industry and management, which conduct us to things useful, convenient, and entertaining. While these lead to nothing inconsistent with our fundamental rule, reason has no more to do than stand ready to take alarm in case they should deviate into a dangerous course: nay, she may assist in contriving how to compass any present desire, so it be innocent. For the present pleasure and gratification is our good, when tending to nothing hurtful in the consequences: good itself being no more than the way to pleasure which will successively be present: so here appetite and desire may be suffered to work without interruption or control.

But whenever it is expedient for reason to interpose, either in restraining desires when they go astray, or in contracting new ones that may run in a proper course; the advancement of general good is the polar star whereto all her measures ought constantly to point. Yet reason, in the shadowy mazes of life, can seldom get a clear sight of this polar star; therefore wants a magnetic needle to mark the line wherein it lies, and a compass to divide the horizon into distinct compartments: or, to lay aside the figure, our fundamental rule is too general for common use; therefore we must examine what particular rules branch out from thence, which may serve to direct us in the several parts of our conduct.

5. It may perhaps be thought at first sight, that the advancement of general good implies something whereof the universe in general may reap a benefit: but we are too inconsiderable creatures ever to have a prospect of doing such extensive service. Yet the whole being made up of individuals, the general good is promoted by whatever good can be done among them: so that our rule directs us to regard the interest of our fellow-creatures standing within our reach, because by procuring an addition to happiness anywhere, we shall increase the common stock.

Then it is obvious that each of us is one of the individuals composing the whole, so that the good we procure for ourselves is like increase of the common stock with what we can procure for another. Whence it becomes a part of our duty to be regardful of our own interests, to improve our faculties as well of body as mind in such manner as may render them most serviceable to ourselves, to provide the means contributing to our own enjoyment, and in our intercourse among others to take care they do not encroach upon our happiness.

For if I please myself by doing something that tends to the greater detriment of another, or if I let him please himself in something that tends to my greater detriment: the common stock will suffer diminution in both cases. Thus our fundamental rule parts into two principal branches, Prudence and Benevolence: the one attentive to our own interests the other to those of our fellow-creatures: and both together call upon us constantly to prefer either interest, whichever shall appear the more valuable; which two branches are commonly called our duty to ourselves, and to our neighbour.

6. If we reflect upon the grounds whereon we have established our fundamental rule, and the steps whereby we arrived at what knowledge we have of the invisible world and mutual connection of interests, we may

recollect they lay solely in the character of that Power who is the Author of all nature, visible and invisible. Should we cast aside the thoughts of him, our prospect would lie dark, uncertain, and comfortless before us. We might know our own immortality, but should not know how that immortality would pass; whether in wisdom or folly, in plenty or distress, in pleasure or pain, among friends or enemies: nor could we tell what acquisitions to make here that might be depended upon to stand us in stead hereafter. And we should have no inducement from our own interest, that natural and original spring of action, to consult the public benefit; any further than we might expect some advantage from it in this present life: or were we to harbour false thoughts of him, we might imagine him revengeful, severe, impossible to be pleased, the object of dread and terror: or else capricious, partial, delighting to see us worry and torment one another.

Therefore that part of prudence which relates to the solace of our own minds and the pleasing hope of an interest that cannot be hurt by sinister accidents here below, and the interest of our fellow-creatures, so far as it may stand affected by our unreserved good-will towards them, make it incumbent upon us to cultivate just sentiments of the supreme Being, and practise all methods in our power of strengthening and rectifying them. Whence springs a third branch of the fundamental rule, which is Piety, or our duty to God. For in strictness of speaking we owe no duty to God directly; not that he has no claim to our services, but because there is no real service that we can do him, and he will not require of us impossibilities. For when we have done all, we are still unprofitable servants: our good works add nothing to his strength, or riches, or happiness: if we sing psalms with ever so much devotion and melody, we afford him no entertainment; and if we blaspheme from morning to night, we cannot give him a moment's vexation.

But it is said, God made all things for his glory, and that is the aim we ought constantly to pursue in our several stations. This may be the proper aim to direct us in our proceedings, who cannot always see the remotest of his purposes; but can we suppose this the ultimate end that set his omnipotence in motion? Shall we take our conceptions of him from our own tastes and infirmities? or imagine that, as an earthly poet labours to complete his work, that he may review the performance with conscious complacence, and make his way to universal fame, so God, tired with an uncomfortable solitude, spreads forth his worlds in admirable wisdom and infinite variety, that he might amuse himself with beholding his handy work, and created innumerable hosts of intelligent Beings, to make his hours cheerful with their hallelujahs? Is it not a more probable construction of the expression, to understand thereby that he made all things in goodness, which is the attribute for which we have most reason to glorify him? and that he expects we should be continually attentive to his glory, because this is most eminently conducive to our happiness? Therefore the most effectual way of glorifying him is, by improving the condition of our own minds, and acquiring a steady attachment to the good of our fellow-creatures: for to them we may do service; and what is done unto one of the least of these our brethren, is done unto him. And if he does enjoin us other particular services to exercise our obedience, it is because he knows that obedience most beneficial to ourselves. Thus in all lights it appears, that our duty to God grows out of our duty to ourselves and to our neighbour.

7. Many perhaps may think it a degradation of our duty to God to make

it a secondary obligation; whereas the most judicious and discerning persons have always esteemed it the first and principal duty, to take place before the other two. But so it may well be, notwithstanding all we have been saying; for many things in common life, having only a derivative value, yet are prized above their originals. What is money worth, unless for the necessaries and conveniences to be had therewith? Yet if the house were on fire, who would not run to snatch up his cash, and leave his beds, his furniture, the victuals in his larder, to perish in the flames? for his pockets will hold money to purchase more goods than he could possibly carry away upon his back. What is an estate good for, unless the produce it will yield? therefore land is valued according to its fertility. Yet who would not rather have his growing crop destroyed than his estate taken from him? and for this obvious reason, because, by losing his land, he loses all the succeeding crops he might expect to reap from it. So, when the interests of religion happen to interfere with public or private interest, they ought nevertheless to be pursued: because more mischief would ensue from a breach made upon them than any present advantage could compensate.

But then care must be taken that the religion, whereto such sacrifice is made, be pure and genuine; which it cannot be, unless it tend so much to the benefit of the creatures as to make it worth their while to offer the sacrifice. For religion was given for our good, not for that of the giver; wherefore the fruits it yields are the proper criterion to distinguish between true religion and heresy. We cannot indeed always know those fruits, for they are sometimes brought forth by secret ways we think not of; therefore we are not to reject everything whereof we do not directly discern the benefit: but whatever opinion or practice tends visibly to the disorder of our own mind, or to lessen our idea of the divine goodness, or to make us remiss in our duties to one another, we may safely pronounce heretical.

If we encourage gloomy and suspicious notions of God, filling us with doubts or despondencies, and making him our dread and terror rather than our protection and confidence: this is not for his glory, which shines brightest in the opinion of his fatherly care and beneficence. If we conceive him partial, confining his favours within some narrow pale: neither is this for his glory, which is the greater by how much the more extensive. If we be prone to censure or detest all who differ from us, either in opinion or way of life; we do not pay obedience to him who expects from us, that we should even love our enemies. If we make our virtue austere, painful, and uninviting; we do not let our light so shine before men as that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven. If we place our dependence upon the externals of religion, thinking them acceptable to him for their own sake; we degrade him in our imagination, as supposing him to want something from us for his own use, and forgetting that his service is what service we can do to one of the least among our brethren. If we continually hunt after sermons and prayers, in neglect of the duties of our station; we prefer that which is only a nominal service to what he will esteem a real one. If we bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and make them the sole object of our thoughts; we forget there are duties owing to the rich, to our friends, and to the community; and that obedience does not consist in performing one single branch of duty that happens to touch us strongly, but in applying industriously to every good office wherein we may be serviceable.

8. Since then our own real benefit and that of our fellow-creatures is to be the grand object of our endeavours, and our obedience is best manifested

by applying them thereto; we ought to labour to make that benefit as extensive as possible, preferring always the greater good before the less. Whence our principal attention should seem due to the improvement of our condition in another life, as being the more durable and valuable: and to the services of purely spiritual substances, as being more numerous than the embodied falling under our notice. For it has been shown in the first volume, that neither of these objects lie beyond our reach; our present state being preparatory to the next, and our little transactions answering some uses of invisible Beings. But though they do not lie beyond our reach, they lie in the dark where we cannot possibly grope them out: for we know not how anything we can do will affect other systems, so might as well do them a displeasure as a service by our officiousness; therefore we have no duty to them, not that we owe them no kindness, but because we know not by what methods we can do them any.

And with regard to our future state, we can gather nothing from experience and observation to direct us what provision to make for it. Our present appetites and desires would be troublesome, and our science useless, in a country where all things are totally dissimilar from that we inhabit now: our virtues being acquired affections, our moral wisdom and sentiments of piety being habitual trains of thinking, connect with the animal machine, because we find them stronger or weaker according as that stands disposed, nor can expect to carry them with us when separated from that: so that we may probably be born into the new world as much a blank paper as ever we came into this. We may have already within us our spiritual body wherein we are to rise again: and this may receive alteration from our ways of living, and acting, and thinking; for that it should do so, agrees with the course of nature in other cases open to our observation. We know that our pre-existent state of the womb was preparatory to our present, by forming and fashioning those instruments of action we have now to employ. A learned German physician, one Stahl, as we are told by Doctor Hartley, has undertaken to prove that all our automatic or mechanical motions, such as the pulsation of the heart and secretion of the glands, are consequences of certain voluntary motions performed by the fœtus: so that we lay the foundation of our strength or weakness, alertness or stupidity, by our own conduct while yet unborn.

But, without laying stress upon the opinion of a person of uncertain credit, nobody can deny that our condition in this world stands very much affected by what passed with us in the little material world whereof we were the sole inhabitant. For from thence we derive our health and vigour of body, the suppleness of our joints, the perfectness of our limbs, the tablet of our memory our natural talents and capacities, enabling us to discern, to distinguish, compare, allude, and practise all other exercises conducing to our benefit and entertainment. And though we brought from thence neither knowledge, nor habit, nor expertness, nor accomplishment of any kind, but came away a blank paper: yet our paper is very differently made and variously disposed to receive useful characters upon it, according to the workmanship it underwent in the paper-mill. Nevertheless, no anatomy can lay open our spiritual body to our view, or show in what proportion and lineaments its perfection consists, with what nerves and fibres of the animal frame it connects, or in what particular manner their action affects it: so that we might know the regimen of diet, the courses of exercise, the topics of meditation, the affections, desires, habits, stores of knowledge, and casts of imagination, proper to fashion the little limbs and organs, and render

them fit instruments for conveying the notices we shall want to receive, or performing the works we shall have to execute.

9. Thus have we a preparation of the utmost importance to make, without any knowledge how to proceed in the making it. Therefore under this uncertainty let us look up to Heaven for direction: for thither we are privileged to resort when all sublunary means of information fail us. It is currently believed that directions have been delivered by special messengers sent from thence and duly authorized, nor shall I pretend to question their authority: but my province being human reason, I am not entitled to pass the bounds I have prescribed myself. Let us then search about in order to find a mark of direction somewhere within our own territory. Now our reason has led us to the knowledge of one Governor, by whose power and wisdom all things are regulated as well in heaven as upon earth, and consequently that the universe was formed upon one all-comprehensive plan; that the regions it contains are parts of one entire whole, and the laws provided for them severally are but branches of one general polity; so that whatever tends to keep up good order in any part, tends to the preservation of order throughout the whole. Whence the same reason may convince us that by fulfilling our duty as members of the district wherein we are placed, we shall effectually perform our part as citizens of the world.

For as in every well-policied kingdom, the inhabitant who consults the good of his own parish, the professor, the trader, the shopkeeper, the artificer, who performs the functions of his several calling, contributes a share towards the good of the kingdom; and as the schoolboy, who conforms to his master's rules, provides himself with qualities conducive to his better living when he comes out into the world: so if we steadily pursue the interests of our fellow-creatures with whom we have a visible intercourse, and our own temporal interests so far as are consistent with the former; we shall infallibly, though unwittingly, perform all the services we are capable of to our elder brethren of the purely spiritual kind, and fall into the measures most beneficial to our spiritual body as rendering it most capable of activity and enjoyment.

10. Thus the temporal interests of mankind appear to be the magnetic needle constantly pointing to our polar star, and by this we ought to steer our course in the voyage of life: for this will not only render our voyage agreeable, but will prove our safest conductor to the country whereto we are bound. There may be doctrines whose use is not obviously apparent, and will lay ourselves, and even the community, under some temporary inconveniences; but whatever necessarily introduces disorder and disquiet into our own minds, or tends to the detriment of mankind in general, we may boldly condemn as spurious.

If any very righteous person shall charge me with making religion subservient only to temporal interest, the charge is unjust: for I have endeavoured all along to show that it promotes other interests besides, far more extensive than perhaps he is aware of; but it promotes this likewise at the same time. If he thinks it an undervaluing of religion, to suppose it enjoining nothing that has not a reference to this world: let him consider whether he esteems it for the honour of religion, that any precept should be found in it, which being generally practised, would not make the condition of human life better; or any sentiment of genuine piety which duly inculcated would not add to our tranquillity and solace of mind. For when I talk of temporal interest, I do not confine my thoughts to those external advantages usually engrossing the name. If therefore what is genuine,

naturally produces these effects, what has a contrary tendency, however specious it may appear, can carry the form only without the substance of religion.

Therefore we may now, as has been done before by a better authority, compare the kingdom of heaven, as erected in the hearts of men, to a grain of mustard: which, though among the smallest of seeds, grows up into a plant in whose branches the birds of the air may harbour. For though its immediate operation extend no further than to make us satisfied with the universe we live in, to raise us out of ourselves and inspire us with an honest zeal for the good of mankind; yet this little principle wherever taking strong root, casts an influence upon all our actions and sentiments, making life more cheerful, and alleviating the burdens of it; and if universally prevailing, would banish wars, injuries, greediness, and indolence, and restore a Paradise upon earth. But the misfortune is, that the ordinary narrowness of our views makes the object of this principle difficult to be comprehended: for you can no sooner mention private interest than you are thought to speak of some advancement in fortune, credit, or station; nor of public, than you convey the idea of commerce, riches, or strength of the nation. Whereas true interest is the same with happiness, which does not derive from any single source, but must be supplied by a multitude of little rills: which we comprise, with Mr. Pope, under three general articles, health, peace, and competence.

11. I shall begin with Competence, as being that which starts up first in the imagination of most people when turning their thoughts upon interest. But as I make so few general articles, I must extend them beyond their ordinary signification, that they may have room to contain all the particulars wanted to be ranged under them: therefore I do not restrain competence to a sufficiency of fortune, but comprehend under it all the externals contributing to the preservation and enjoyment of life. For what avails it for a man to have his pockets full of gold, if he be placed in some desolate spot where no conveniences are to be had either for love or money? What comfort can he find in perpetual solitude, though with all the materials of pleasure stored plentifully about him? or what enjoyment can he have of his riches or his neighbours, while continually liable to the control of some imperious master? So that besides money, there are opportunities of laying it properly out: besides meats and drinks, house-room and furniture, there are society and liberty among the ingredients requisite for making up a competence.

And for the community, though riches, strength, and law be the main pillars of security and liberty, nevertheless, the arts, sciences, manners, manufactures, commodities, and materials of innocent amusement, go to complete the competence of a nation. Therefore let every man take that part in the public service belonging to him. The great men watch over the main pillars, to preserve them from decay or damage: and it is their business to take care that in their hurry of shoving away one another from the work, they do not shove the pillar itself. But this is not the task for persons of private station, who have no skill in masonry, nor means of acquiring any: for they may thrum over Britons, North-Britons, and Monitors from morning to night, without being ever the wiser. Therefore if they would study to mend something in their family, their acquaintance or their neighbourhood, this would be the most effectual method in their power towards mending the affairs of the nation.

But it is a common mistake to imagine that, by continually adding to

some particular branch of competence, we shall always render it more complete: for competence is as much destroyed by redundancy as by deficiency. A multitude of goods greater than one can use, is a burden and an incumbrance rather than a benefit: an acquaintance may be too numerous as well as too narrow: and a total exemption from check and controul often betrays into irretrievable mischiefs. For as perfection in the human body consists in the apt proportion of its parts; so our stock of externals cannot increase exorbitantly in one part without falling defective in some other: wherefore due regard must be had to all the necessaries and conveniences of life. The absolute necessaries of nature, without which life and health could not be supported, are few: but education, custom, habit, and fashion, create many necessaries which had no existence in nature. However a man may stand disposed in himself, the decent compliance with the world will draw some of these necessities upon him; but it is prudent to multiply them as little as possible, because we shall run the hazard of multiplying wants in the same proportion. Therefore, as I have observed in a former place, that desire is gratified alike, either by procuring the objects it affects, or by turning it upon objects we have ready at hand, so in this case it behoves us to examine upon every occasion, whether is the more feasible and eligible method, to provide the necessaries we want, or to make them none by learning to do without them.

But were the world ever so well supplied with necessaries, and divested of all other wants than those they could easily satisfy, still they would not have a sufficient spur to their activity, nor relish to make their hours pass smoothly, if they had nothing else besides necessaries to think on: therefore something must be done for convenience, engagement, and entertainment. For it is the arts and embellishments of life that make the difference between civilized and savage; that keep industry awake, prevent the growth of evil habits nourished by idleness; that cement society by making men needful and helpful to one another; that whet and strengthen the faculties for works of greatest necessity and importance. If they are often pursued too strongly, it is the excess alone that vitiates the pursuit: for what tends only to promote cheerfulness, ease, and amusement, if it draw no bad consequences nor interrupt any more valuable work, is a mite added to the sum of happiness.

Nor is it impossible they may add more than the mite, for when we reflect on the constitution of our corporeal and mental organs requiring recreation and diversion, and the natural utter incapacity of some persons for weighty undertakings; we may rationally presume that God, who carries both worlds in view and has more purposes than one in his dispensations, has made our innocent amusements productive of important uses unknown and undiscernible to us. For it had been easy for him to have made us all serious and solemn creatures, capable of incessant labour and intense thought, without ear for music, without eye for neatness, elegance, or beauty, without taste for building or gardening, and without relish for diversion; if he had judged it for the benefit of his creation.

12. The next article, Health, I must likewise take in a larger latitude than ordinarily given it: comprising not only what relates to the prevention of diseases, and keeping the body clear of foulness, but also the bringing the limbs, organs, faculties, and other parts of our frame into such state wherein they may best perform the services we shall require of them. This cannot be denied a matter of great importance: for what signifies competence to a distempered body that can receive no enjoyment, or an

unexperienced mind that knows not how to reap the proper advantages from it.

To this article belong the cares of nurture and education, those exercises and instructions that teach the management of the limbs or give expertness in marshalling the thoughts, and in general whatever can be called learning or accomplishment. Nor must we leave out the virtues and moral senses, the knowledge of men and things, the acquiring tastes, desires, and habits, which may contribute to our use and entertainment, and the quickening our activity so as that it may support us under labour when necessary, and carry us through our ordinary transactions with ease, readiness, and alacrity. For he cannot be reckoned sound and healthful throughout, who has contracted vicious appetites, turbulent passions, or inconvenient habits; whose faculties are weakened, inexpert to perform their functions, or ill supplied with their proper nourishment; and whose active powers are stiffened by the scurvy of idleness.

But as we have not all the same part to act in life, this health is relative; that being complete in one man, which would prove defective in another. The weaver wants not the sturdiness and intrepidity of the soldier; nor does the latter want the nice finger of a musician, nor variegated imagination of the poet. Delicacy and elegance would do hurt to the porter: and his endurance of nastiness and coarse living might be improper for the nobleman. Wherefore let us consider situations and circumstances: and let each man lay in the particular stock of health and vigour most suitable to his constitution, fittest for his own services and those he owes to others with whom he has intercourse. Yet there is one branch of health which, like the lively smooth beatings of the pulse, suits well with all conditions: an alert spirit, ready to make the proper use of every present occasion, so that there may remain no vacant hours unsupplied either by business or diversion: proceeding without trepidation or anxiety, yet without intermission or sluggishness. Sometimes an entire relaxation is necessary, and so is sleep; but where there is this alertness in the constitution, neither will be suffered to steal away any more of our time than we find requisite for our refreshment.

But an ill habit, whether of body or mind, is not to be rectified, nor dexterity of any kind in either to be gotten, presently; for preparations are to be made, many externals provided, to help on the acquisition, and gradations passed through to render it complete. So that the article of health, in this comprehensive signification, will take up much of our thoughts and industry to establish it in ourselves and contribute towards perfecting it in the community, so far as our little power and opportunities extend. And to gain any success, we must proceed with discretion as well as resolution, driving the nail that will go, regarding rather what is feasible than what is desirable, looking round on all sides to observe remote consequences, learning how to mingle steadiness with compliance, becoming all things to all men, humouring times and companies, yet without being ever compelled or seduced to act against our judgment.

13. The third article, Peace, relates to the tranquillity and solace of the mind: this is the most important of the three, and indeed the other two are valuable only as they contribute to this. For externals will set the mind at peace for a while, when newly acquired or near in expectation: and so will an advancement in any science or dexterity, a new discovery, a curiosity, a diversion, or indulgence of appetite. But these are only casual and temporary expedients, to be had just when luck befriends us, soothing

for the present and often drawing on a greater disquietude. The only secure and durable peace the mind can expect, must come from her own fund: when she is stored with sentiments continually prompting to a right course of behaviour, satisfied with her own actions, and apt to content herself with whatever befals her.

Some have placed happiness solely in this rectitude of temper, despising externals and endowments of body or mind, as matters of mere indifference: but we cannot go so far, for rectitude seems too airy to stand without some more solid ground. Nothing were right unless something else were valuable which it is right to pursue: even justice could have no rectitude, if there were no goodness in property which it tends to preserve. And though the mind may feel satisfaction in the rectitude of her deeds without view to consequences, yet this is a translated satisfaction, which must wear away unless renewed from time to time by experience of the consequences.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that much of the good to be received from other things depends upon the inward turn and disposition, and that this will sometimes insure peace when all other sources fail. For what avails an abundance of goods and possessions, an exuberance of health, quickness of parts and store of accomplishments, if the mind be restless within herself, always hankering after what she has not, rather than using and enjoying what she has? on the contrary, distress, disease, and incapacity, become heavier or lighter burdens in proportion to the firmness of mind there is to support them: and perhaps were this firmness complete, it must render the weightiest of them easy, for there is always something to be done towards making our condition better; and till this can be achieved, the mind may find solace from the endeavours she uses in advancing towards it. But as such perfect soundness, proof against all accidents that can intervene, is scarce attainable in practice, it behoves us to provide against the weakness of human nature, and if possible avoid putting it to trials greater than it can bear.

Whence it becomes a branch of necessary prudence to endeavour placing ourselves in the situation, and to take up the employments, best suited to our taste and genius; for therein we shall be likely to pass our time comfortably, and to do our work most successfully: as likewise to avoid having much intercourse with persons of odd and difficult characters, enough to ruffle a philosopher, or whose ways and humours are greatly discordant from our own; especially in those connections which are likely to be of long continuance and cannot be broken off whenever we will. But since we have not always our choice in these particulars, there is the more reason to provide a resource within ourselves by a robustness and serenity of mind not easy to be thrown off the hinges by unfavourable accidents. Which temper is not to be gained by a single effort how strenuous soever: for it is a habit and must be nourished up gradually by vigilance and constant exercise; yet every single effort is a help towards the growth of the habit, and the contracting it in little matters renders it more easy to be contracted in greater.

Therefore no opportunity is to be lost or overlooked for rendering peace habitual to the mind by checking every little motion to fretfulness or peevishness, averseness to trouble, apprehension of danger, regret at a loss, vexation for a disappointment, impatience for a pleasure, hurry in an undertaking, or anxiety under a suspense that rises in the breast: nor ought anything practicable to be omitted for spreading peace amongst other people, whether by exhortation, advice, example, exclamation, humour

ridicule, or whatever method is most suitable to the occasion. But though something may be done towards quieting the mind by dint of resolution, yet we shall succeed more effectually if we can get some soothing prospect to assist us: for present uneasiness cannot always be assuaged unless by thoughts of absent good. Therefore the ground and never-failing source of peace is, Hope, which arises from an impartial contemplation of nature, for if we survey it through false glasses, so as to persuade ourselves that men are born enemies to one another, and that the condition of creatures, a very few excepted, is wretched and despicable; this will be more likely to fill us with melancholy and horror than with comfort: but a candid and benevolent temper will discover so many advantages and enjoyments everywhere as to give us a cheerful idea of the world we live in.

Yet this idea cannot have its full effect without religion, which alone can ensure us a share in the stream of bounty that flows copiously on all sides, and opens a much larger and richer prospect into the invisible world than this narrow earth can afford. Nevertheless, care must be taken not to embrace everything hastily that carries the appearance of religion: for many by an injudicious earnestness to become religious, have filled themselves with doubts and despondencies, destroyed their own peace, entertained an unfavourable opinion as well of their fellow-creatures as of the creation, and thought narrowly and unworthily of their Creator. Wherefore it is of the utmost importance, and deserves our principal attention, to cultivate just sentiments of him, and as he wants not our adoration nor our services, but has vouchsafed so much knowledge of himself as he judges needful, and given us religion for our benefit; we may be sure that is the truest which tends most to preserve our minds in a steady tenor, to draw us out of hurtful courses, and to make us profitable to one another.

CHAP. II.

ESOTERICS AND EXOTERICS.

Religion, although justly styled the service of God, because then only having the true and real value when performed in obedience to his Will, yet was not given to serve himself, but his creatures: therefore must be adapted to their needs and their natures, in order to become serviceable to them. But human nature being very various among people and individuals according to their capacities, endowments or casts of imagination; their diversity of characters requires a different management to serve them effectually. And you may as well think of setting out a measure of clothes that shall fit everybody, as of drawing up a complete system of Religion accommodated to the uses of all mankind.

Much discourse has passed in the world upon uniformity, and indeed an uniformity of profession were a desirable thing, as preventing discordance among mankind, and a contempt of Religion in general. For religious feuds being the most mischievous and rancorous of any, no care can be too great to avoid them. Nor is anything more contrary to the grand purpose of Religion, the general good, than for men to persuade themselves they do God service in vexing and ill-treating one another: or more injurious to his glory, than to imagine him entertaining a hatred and enmity against his

creatures. And the bulk of mankind, unable to strike out anything of themselves, would have no restraint upon their passions, no awe or dependence, or perhaps no thought of an invisible Power governing both worlds, if they were not let into it by custom and authority: but authority and custom have the stronger influence the more generally they are complied with.

Therefore it is expedient and necessary to have some form of doctrine generally agreed to, for preserving peace and a regard to futurity among the people. And the more concise and simple this form can be contrived, the better: because more comprehensive, as being easier accommodated to the diversity of characters. But no established form can contain the whole of every man's opinions, for unless he strikes out something of his own from what has been taught him, he will make very little proficiency in Religion: and the same expressions convey very different ideas to a number of hearers; so that it is not to be concluded that we have all exactly the same sentiments, because we all join in the same form of words.

How short is the first article of our creed? I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. Yet how various are our conceptions of the supreme Being? some conceive him governed by human affections, such as anger, hatred, desire of honour, favour, complacence to those who resemble him; absolutely uncertain of the turns of freewill, unable to make his work perfect, but perpetually interposing to mend what falls out amiss, hurt by offences which he cannot remit without an amends made him in value. Others believe him exempt from passion of all kinds, acting invariably by reason, just such as ours only not liable to error, and somewhat better informed as having a larger scene to contemplate, proceeding upon the rectitude resulting from a nature of things which was not of his own production. Others again hold him the author of reason itself, of qualities, forms, and essences, as well as of substances, leaving nothing to chance or contingency, able to provide adequate causes for bringing all his purposes to bear, never interposing on sudden emergencies from an unforeseen necessity, but in consequence of his own predetermination to interpose.

Then for the epithet Almighty, if any one would see what multitude of reflections that alone gives scope to, let him read over doctor Barrow's long sermon upon the Greek word Pantocratoor. Seneca supposed the elements uncreated, and gave that for the reason why the world was not better made, because some of the elements being sluggish and untractable, could not be brought into a completer form: yet he allowed that God has made as good a world as his materials were capable of. So he would not have scrupled joining with us in repeating, Maker of heaven and earth. And though now we all believe the materials created by the same hand that worked them up into a regular system, yet we are not so unanimous with respect to the time. It is the common opinion, I suppose, that they were created just when wanted for the uses we see them put to: but many learned and pious men have holden them existent, and perhaps employed in other uses, before the Mosaic creation; much more that the glorious Sun and immeasurably distant stars were above a week older than Adam.

How shall we expound heaven so as to compass an uniformity of sentiments? The common people place it in the atmosphere: whence the expressions of the birds of heaven, the dews of heaven, and the heavens opening when it lightens. Some may begin it just above the atmosphere: others perhaps remove it beyond the starry sphere and visible universe. But when

we reflect on the earth's motion in her annual orbit, we shall find that was heaven yesterday which is earth to-day, and the space contained in the room I now sit in will be part of heaven to-morrow. Some perhaps may imagine that heaven is not local, but it is our immersion into body that excludes us from thence: so that if all our material bars could be bursten asunder, we should instantly find ourselves in heaven without removing from our places.

Thus a perfect uniformity of sentiments is neither practicable nor needful: it is enough that we agree together so far as that we may act in concert upon the common occasions of life, and not disturb one another in our religious exercises. Therefore our laws have wisely provided for such an uniformity of professions as is requisite to maintain order and good harmony, and keep alive a sense of religion in all parts of the community: giving full liberty and indulgence to any diversity of opinions that does not tend to invalidate those provisions, and unsettle the minds of the people.

2. Yet is this liberty to be used cautiously: for speculative opinions may have an influence upon practical, and one man's speculations, though innocent and salutary to himself, may cause disquietude and do mischief in the mind of another, who perhaps will draw inferences from them the author never intended nor would think consequential, tending to overthrow some established tenet, or even subversive of religion and good manners. For in every science, those who make it their business to dive into the depths of it, find a very different scene of things from those who take only so much as is requisite for common use: and such as have bestowed much thought upon the foundations of right and wrong, discover many contrarieties and absurdities in the popular notions; as on the other hand their refinements appear unintelligible and absurd to the generality. Therefore it behoves every man to regard not only what is rational, consistent, and wholesome to himself, but what will continue so when thrown into a diversely moulded imagination: reserving the former for his private use, or for those of a similar cast, but dealing out the latter only to all comers.

Hence the so noted distinction among philosophers of their esoteric and exoteric doctrines, the one to be trusted only with adepts, the other communicated to the vulgar: or if they did sometimes venture the former in a mixed audience, they couched them under such enigmatical and mysterious terms that nobody could tell what to make of them without the secret enigmatical key. But this reserve of theirs has been commonly placed in a wrong light; as if proceeding from a vain and niggardly temper, fond of hoarding up their treasures for themselves and thinking any worthless scraps good enough for the vulgar. Nor has the word Vulgar contributed a little towards encouraging this notion, as signifying with us a person of mean understanding, little knowledge or accomplishment: so that Adept is regarded as a title of honour, and Vulgar as a word of reproach. Whereas in former times the terms were relative to some art, or science, or profession, respectively comprising all who were or were not masters therein: so that the philosopher himself was among the vulgar with regard to commerce, masonry, navigation, or other business he did not understand, and acknowledged such as were skilful in each profession for adepts.

3. Contempt and jealousy are the natural growth of little minds: and pretenders to a knowledge they have not, must affect profoundness and mystery in order to keep the secret of those artifices they employ for getting a false reputation, which would vanish as soon as seen through. But meekness, candour, openness of temper and unreserved benignity, are characteristics of the true philosopher. He aims at genuine happiness, not at

any spacious glare of it as seen through the optics of passion or fancy. He pursues knowledge for the use, not the credit of it, and desires reputation no further than as it may gain him better attention, and thereby enable him to do better service. He chooses his science, not as the most noble and most elevated above all others, but as most suited to his particular genius and circumstances in life. For he knows the business of the world cannot be carried on without many heads variously qualified, and it behoves each labourer to take that part of the work for which nature and fortune have peculiarly adapted him: that being the most noble and becoming to every one, wherein he may proceed with greatest profit to the community. He sees that active professions are more necessary to the public well-being than speculative, and that many of them require as great acuteness of parts, soundness of judgment, and as piercing sagacity, as the depths of philosophy.

Though his thoughts are continually raised up to objects above the common observance, he does not think himself higher in merit or accomplishment upon that account. For as a sailor ordered up the main-mast top to descry ships, or clouds, or promontories at a distance, though higher in situation, is not higher in rank and eminence than the crew below, who take their measures according to his signals: so he considers himself as placed upon some watch tower, there to sit a careful spectator of the earth with its inhabitants, their ways, natures, and all that passes therein, and the heavens with all their glories; only to draw notices from thence for the service of his fellow-labourers, busied in employments below as useful and as laudable.

But he knows that in all professions there are certain technical terms and technical trains of thinking unintelligible to those who are not conversant in the business, though perhaps of superior understandings and more extensive knowledge. Therefore he communicates his notices where he judges they will be understood: for he esteems nothing too good for anybody, but if he withholds his lights from any, it is not owing to a supercilious opinion of their unworthiness, but to their inability to receive them; which inability he does not attribute to a dulness of apprehension, or any other defect that might lessen them in his estimation, but to a want of the preparation necessary for that particular purpose.

4. Nor is he more prone to monopolize than to despise: for what valuables he possesses are of a nature to be imparted without diminishing the stock of the owner. Neither does he grudge any person whatever benefit he can do him; but he knows that one man's meat may prove another man's poison, and it would be no benefit to give another what must disagree with him. So he changes or disguises his potions, not with intention to deceive, but to render them innocent and salubrious. For he studies to make the good he does as extensive as possible, which he knows cannot be effected without paying as much regard to constitutions as to the nature of the remedies. He finds the current language among mankind variable and uncertain, their words changing colours when transported into other phrases, and their expressions variously understood according to the occasion. So he is forced to form a language of his own, the terms whereof may be steady, so as not to entangle his thoughts in equivocations, but capable of being constructed into a compact and regular system, from whence his occasional reasonings may spring like branches growing from a tree.

As he pursues knowledge to its foundations, it appears there in a different

form from what it does upon the surface, and leads him into reflections unfamiliar to common comprehension, because generally unheeded as being useless in common life. For the rules of action often take a different cast from the reasons giving them birth; and like a winding road seem to carry the traveller quite away from the point whereto they will conduct at last. Therefore he has one set of doctrines for his private use, and another for his neighbours: not that they vary in substance, for the drift of both is to infuse as pure, consistent, and sublime notions of the Deity as possible, to bring the mind satisfied with herself, to direct and animate the receiver in fulfilling the social and prudential duties of his station; but the one is a translation of the other into the vulgar language.

For if he were to deliver his sentiments in his own, he would be so far from dealing honestly with his hearers that he would prevaricate and deceive them egregiously, by conveying ideas the most foreign to his real thoughts. If he talked of interest, they would understand him of getting money or preferment: if he recommended gratification, they would think only of the present fancy starting up in their heads: if he asserted God to be totally exempt from passion or affection, they would imagine there could be neither favour nor vengeance, neither reward nor punishment: if he represented him incapable of receiving pleasure or vexation from anything we do, they would suppose it all one in what manner we behave, all actions being beheld with equal indifference by the all-seeing eye. Therefore to convey his real sentiments he must disguise and even contradict them, the idioms of the two languages being so widely different, that to keep the spirit of the original, he must sometimes express himself directly opposite to the articles of his own creed.

5. And the better to satisfy the world with their being dealt with after this manner, we think it probable he will practise the honest same artifice upon himself. For he cannot fail of knowing he is only sensitive-rational: so whatever use he may make of his understanding in speculation, he must not expect to live by reason; but his conduct will be guided by such rules and opinions as he has stored up in his imagination. But imagination will throw her own clumsy shapes and gross colourings upon whatever is deposited with her: nor can she contain any great lengths of refinement without losing them among the sensible objects, wherewith she is continually conversant. Therefore he has one cast of mind for the closet, and another to serve him for practice when he enters into the busy world, accommodated to the scenes he expects to meet with there.

Your beginners in science, fond of a new discovery, cannot lay it aside upon occasion: so they mingle subtilties among their common affairs, and gross ideas among their meditations; which causes a confusion and awkwardness in both. But the perfection of art lies in separating them distinctly: wherein whoever has attained a competent proficiency, will have his particular ranges, and such command over his thoughts as to turn them at any time into the reasonable train. For upon ordinary occurrences he will find it necessary to employ the ministry of the senses, and take the judgments they have been habituated to make: in his intercourse among other people, the force of sympathy will insensibly assimilate his conceptions to theirs; or if he could resist this force, it would only destroy the ease, the freedom, and the mutual benefit of that intercourse.

These circumstances make it often necessary for us to conceive of things otherwise than we know them to be: we know the sun stands still, and the earth rolls around him with inconceivable rapidity; yet to think of the stately

fabrics, the spacious cities, the seated mountains, the brimming ocean, and the universal quiescence of a still evening, rushing forward with such incessant impetuosity, is an idea too unwieldy for our imagination. We know the fire only dissipates, but does not destroy: yet we currently talk of its drying up, consuming, and destroying. We hold matter inert and senseless, but ascribe force to storms and inundations; activity to spirituous liquors and drugs; inclemency to seasons; kindliness to dews; benignity to vernal gleams; and give bodies other powers and affections belonging to ourselves. Nor can we avoid debasing even the divine essence by figurative expressions, makgin it tenable, in our imagination: as when we speak of the hand, the finger, the eye, the voice of God, apprehend him pleased or grieved, angry, compassionate, or jealous, and acting in a manner whereinto we ourselves are led by human passions.

Such then being the constitution of human nature, our professor will conform his measures accordingly, nor try to conduct his ordinary behaviour by the sublimities of reason, which would be a fruitless attempt. He will only employ these at convenient hours to store his imagination with such opinions, maxims, habits, moral senses, desires, and conceptions, as may serve him for daily use. And he will follow the golden rule of doing to others as he does to himself, endeavouring to infuse them with such sentiments as may prove useful and practicable, hiding from them whatever might invalidate or mislead the influence of those sentiments, not aiming to make philosophers of all the world, but reasonable creatures, actuated by such principles as philosophy would recommend. Nor will he neglect to watch over the whole family of imagination, as well in his own breast as elsewhere; in order to correct whatever has run amiss, and alter whatever a variation of circumstances has rendered inexpedient.

6. In humble imitation of this model, I should be glad to make the proper separation between the theoretic and practical doctrines: how well I have managed the point with respect to my private convenience, relates to myself alone, nor does it concern anybody else. And with respect to the public convenience, the times are altered since our forefathers used to select their adepts and their vulgar for their several lectures: for the method of lectures is now grown obsolete, nor, were it not, have I either lungs or fluency for the task. For I am not entitled to talk by myself without contradiction in the regular way, and for the irregular of field-preaching I have no opinion, nor yet the talents requisite to succeed: for it is the marvellous, the surprising, the vehement, and the positive, that draw crowded mobs about the gifted preacher; whereas I pretend to no gifts, other than are bestowed in common among all who are willing to improve them carefully. So I can only lay out my thoughts in writing, and leave it to chance to dispose of them among all sorts of people, who may fancy they shall find something to like or dislike in them, for curiosity will sometimes shoot as vigorously out of the latter expectation as the former.

Since then I am confined to this only method, I may hope to find excuse for the inconveniences unavoidably attending it, and that my readers will make the separation it was not in my power to complete. For either I must have omitted what appeared to me necessary to satisfy the curious, or must venture something unfit for the uses of him who desires only practical knowledge. Therefore, whoever shall find me advancing anything hurtful to Religion or good manners, let him pass it over as not intended for him, nor what I wish might prevail upon him, and do me the justice to believe I did not discern its tendency. For we have not all the same sagacity and pene-

tration, and he may rest persuaded that if I had had his lights and judgment to have pointed out the evil consequences, I should not only have omitted but rejected it. For I look upon Religion and reason as the gifts of God, whose characteristic being goodness, they must be beneficial to be genuine: therefore whatever proves detrimental to mankind, carries in that circumstance an evidence of its being false and spurious. Nor have I carelessly thrown out everything at random, but on the contrary have suppressed some speculations that seemed to me innocent and well grounded, being apprehensive they might give offence: so that I may claim some of the merit ascribed by Roscommon to the versifying tribe, when he says, Poets lose half the praise they might have got, were it but known what they discreetly blot.

As to what esoterics I have vented, such as the foundation of moral duties upon self-interest; the corporeity of mental organs; the homogeneity of created spirits; the rational faculty being a secondary property resulting from the composition of spirit with a fine organization; the dependence of perception, judgment, and free action, upon positions or motions in particles of matter; the universal plan of Providence, comprising all events and leaving no room for contingency; the Attribute of Equity, void of favour, partiality or predilection; the equality of fortunes among spiritual substances; the limited duration of punishment; its exact distribution brought about by natural causes, without needing the formality of a judgment; the balancing periods; the plentitude of the Universe; the various orders of Beings; their intimate commixture; their free-agency, yet so directed as not to disturb the municipal laws belonging to each other; their mutual connection of interests; their endeavours for the benefit of their own species contributing to maintain the general good; and such like. These seemed necessary to complete a regular system, to be worked up from the foundations of experience and reason into a compact uniform fabric; wherein there might be nothing loose, incongruous, or unsupported, to offend the penetrating eye of the speculative. And I have been solicitous all along to do what in me lay to prevent any bad tincture they might cast upon the exoterics calculated for popular use: which to my thinking may with proper management be made to grow more healthy from them, although differing in taste and appearance. For it is no uncommon thing for fruits to have qualities opposite to those of the tree that bore them: but we must cultivate the tree, though we need only gather the fruit for our eating.

7. But the tree being valuable only for the fruit, it becomes a prudent gardener to check the luxuriancy of its branches, to engraff, to prune, to distribute and nail the twigs; and in general to cultivate it in such a manner as that it may yield the most plentiful and goodliest produce. Or, to change the metaphor, we may consider the philosopher as a wholesale trader, importing the principles of reason and conduct from all quarters of nature where he can settle a correspondence. If you go to him for the supply of your family, he cannot accommodate you: for he deals only in tons and hogsheads, or quantities larger than you will know what to do with. Besides that your purchase would consist partly of cask and packing, which must encumber your house; and contains a mixture of stalk, and husk, and rubbish, which would require a great deal of skill and trouble in the picking. Or it may be he will show you piles of plank or bars of ingots, good for no service upon earth until properly manufactured. So it is his business to supply the retailer who may work up his materials into tools and utensils, necessary for the artificer and the private housekeeper:

or pick, and sort, and parcel out his wares, and mingle them in such compositions as that you shall scarce know the ingredients, yet shall find them fit for your immediate consumption.

But it being no unprecedented thing for the gardener to carry his own fruit to market, nor for the wholesale dealer to have a separate shop wherein he carries on the retail business: why may not I be indulged in the like attempt, and permitted to try how the esoterics will look when manufactured in the exoterical form. This is the more commendable enterprise, because great mistakes and absurdities have been committed in the manufactory: so that whatever be the success, the artizans are obliged to me for my good will and endeavours to improve and facilitate the art. Therefore since I have the benefit of the retailer as well as the consumer in view, I cannot wholly lay aside the exercise of the esoteric branch, even while at work upon the exoterics: because I would willingly show how both may be reconciled so as to assist and co-operate with each other, as springing originally from the same root, and conducing ultimately to the same purpose.

For to proceed securely either way, we must proceed upon our experience in the nature of things: but the thing that it concerns us nearest to study is man himself, whose nature we are principally to regard, and shape our conduct accordingly in the measures we take for his benefit. We have already had chapters upon Imagination and Understanding, Conviction and Persuasion, Knowledge and Conception: wherein we have endeavoured to explain the distinction between Reason and Apprehension to show, that one cannot always follow close upon the other; and that most men constantly, and all men generally, are guided in their motions by the latter. We have seen that the virtues themselves do not become perfect until they grow into desires, raising spontaneously without needing the help of reason to recommend them. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to have a well-ordered imagination, to lay in such stores there as it can receive, and as may invigorate and direct our conduct: for without this our knowledge cannot be practical, at least so as to serve us upon occasions wherein we shall need it the most.

To have the full use of our understanding, the body must be free from pain and disorder, the spirits alert, the mind quiet and serene, and nothing external to ruffle or disturb us; but in this situation there is no difficulty how to behave. The seasons most needful to provide against are those of hurry and business, sudden emergencies, alluring pleasures, turbulent passions, dangers, distresses, afflictions, and vexations: when we cannot strike out new lights, nor pursue lengths of meditation, but must avail ourselves of such ideas as shall start up spontaneously to the thought. Therefore when leisure permits and opportunity favours, it behoves us to examine what reason would recommend in all circumstances we may be likely to fall under, and furnish our minds with such apprehensions as may be most effectual for the purpose; no matter whether they contain the whole grounds whereon we proceed. And even in our systems of Theology and Religion, designed for ordinary use, regard must be had not only to the nature of things and to what we know, but likewise to the nature of Man and what he is able easily to conceive.

CHAP. III.

DIVINE PURITY.

HAVING found it necessary to consult all parts of our nature, as well as our inferior faculties presenting the familiar images and trains of thought rising habitually before our view, as the scientific and rational, in order to frame a set of sentiments that may serve us upon ordinary occasions; it will be proper to begin with completing our theology. And this brings us to the three remaining Attributes of Purity, Majesty, and Holiness; which had no place among the esoterics as being not discoverable by contemplation of the divine nature alone, nor the administration of Providence, but rather negative of what is in man, than affirmative of anything in God. For Purity by the derivation implies an exemption from all foul and heterogeneous mixture: so water is pure when clear of mud and soil, and unmingled with other liquors; gold is pure when undebased by any alloy; and the mind is pure when untouched by sordid passions or bestial desires. But these things are capable of having dregs and foulnesses introduced among them, therefore Purity is an excellence, nor can we complete our idea of perfection in them without it. Whereas the divine essence, being simple and individual, cannot mingle with anything foreign to itself; and being impassive, not affected by objects of sensation and reflection, can receive no change of state from passions or desires of any kind. One should wonder, then, why a particular Attribute is assigned the supreme Being, to preserve him from a debasement it is not in his nature to undergo: we might as well make an Attribute of Abstemiousness because he lives without eating, or of hardiness because he wears no clothes to keep him warm.

Nevertheless, it is not so material in this case to consider what is the divine essence, as what is the form and condition of our own imagination. For we cannot behold God intuitively: we can comprehend him no otherwise than by such representation as we are able to frame of him in our thoughts. With the utmost stretch of our understanding, we cannot delineate him exactly, but still find him incomprehensible; and that miniature we carry about in our hearts for constant use falls short even of the drawing in our understanding: whence our representation no more contains the full character of the original, than the print of a picture or statue does that of the hero it was designed to resemble. So that at best we are all but idolaters, and the materials employed in making up our golden image are drawn from our own fund: for we pick what golden particles we can find in ourselves, whatever we esteem an excellence or greatness, or power, or perfection in man; and raising them to the highest degree we can conceive, thereout form our idea of God. But without due care some of the dross belonging to us will cling to the ingredients, and fix itself insensibly among the composition. This is the Idol we worship, to which we look up for protection, and the continual contemplation whereof assimilates our character gradually to itself: therefore it is of the utmost importance to keep this idea clear of all manner of grossness, weakness, or impurity.

The Heathen world supposed their Gods not excepting Jove himself the supreme Monarch over all, subject to the vices, the follies, the humours and

the brutal appetites of man: because they found the like among their heroes and excellent persons, the sons and grandsons of Gods. The Stoics held the material universe to be God, asserted that he was the most perfect animal, of a round form and perpetual activity, whirling round every four and twenty hours: because they could conceive no understanding without material organs to serve for instruments of its operations. There have been Christians called Anthropomorphites, who ascribed to God a human shape, because I suppose they had so much of the Epicurean as to hold that intelligence could not subsist without a brain, and senses, and members such as our own.

And though we have now, I believe, universally discarded all corporeal mixture from the divine essence, except in speaking figuratively of the hand, the eye, the ear, the mouth which we know to be figurative expressions at the instant of employing them: yet when I hear the enthusiasts and illuminated people talk so feelingly of the finger of God immediately touching their hearts, and insist upon the evidence of sense for their revelations; I cannot help suspecting they have an idea of something corporeal and sensible operating upon them; and if they call this the immediate act of God, what is it but making God corporeal? I can just remember when the women first taught me to say my prayers; I used to have the idea of a venerable old man, of a composed, benign countenance, with his own hair, clad in a morning gown of a grave coloured flowered damask, sitting in an elbow chair. I am not disturbed at the grossness of my infant theology, it being the best I could then entertain: for I was then much about as wise as Epicurus, having no conception of sense or authority possible out of a human form. And perhaps the time will come when, if I can look back upon my present thoughts, I may find the most elevated of them as unworthy of their object as I now think the old man in the elbow chair.

2. We now conceive of God as a Spirit, without mixture of anything material to serve him either for organ or instrument: but then we take our notion of Spirit from those among whom we are conversant, that is, from one another; whom we find acting to accomplish something expedient, or to gratify some desire, directed by the notices of their judgment or senses, and characterized by their sentiments and affections: so we apprehend him attentive to the contingencies of chance and free-will, receiving information from his all-discerning eye, proceeding upon the judgments of perfect reason, actuated by those we style the noble affections, concerned for the well-being of his race of men, solicitous to compass his gracious purposes, and to receive the tribute of their willing obedience. Still the lineaments of our image are fetched from human nature, and so they must always be: for we have no colours to employ, nor archetypes to copy, but what were handed to us from experience. And though by the careful exercise of our understanding, we may improve gradually in the fineness of our strokes, yet we cannot retain the delicatest of them in our imagination; which will discern only the grosser parts and see the colours changeable.

Therefore we are forced to discourse and think of God as earnest and anxious, delighted or grieved, angry, compassionate, jealous, or favourable, honoured, served, hurt, or resisted, by our manner of behaviour: apprehending him sometimes an indulgent parent who will not mark what is amiss, at others an unrelenting judge who will call to judgment every idle word: confining our eye to the amiable or terrible part of his character, according as we happen to be in the humour, or as things fall out round about us. This necessity of ascribing our own affections and sentiments to

God, and the variable quality of our ideas, operating insensibly to ourselves, will introduce those of the unworthy sort, and make us attribute the imperfections, the frailties, or even the foulness of created spirits to him, before we are aware: so as to work sometimes a lasting delusion, but oftener a temporary disquietude and misapprehension in our minds.

3. This mischief cannot be totally escaped, for those who pretend to the highest perfection complain of their obscurities, their aridities, their despondencies, their desertions, and all mankind besides can see their delusions and their wildness both of thought and conduct: nor are the most soberly judicious without their lamentations at being unable to preserve constantly the same equal tenor of mind: nevertheless, it may be lessened and in great measure remedied by diligence and good management. For we have seen before, in our examination of human nature, that reason has some power to give a tincture of her own colours to the inferior faculties: and by her continual though gentle efforts, to work an alteration in the habits and trains of thinking. This then is the service we may expect to draw from our esoterics: first to contemplate the divine essence, the dispositions of providence and courses of nature as well external as internal, from thence to gather the reasonable expectation of the events, and natural consequences of actions in particular situations of circumstances we are likely to come into: and then secondly to consider what affections apprehended in the Disposer of all things would produce the same effect.

Thus if the philosopher sees that provision is made for all events within the plan of providence by a complicated multitude of causes, most of them undiscernible by us, and taking a contrary turn to what we should expect: he will represent God as watchful over contingencies, to rectify their errors, and guide them continually by his secret influence into their proper channels. If he discovers that the same good or evil will naturally follow upon certain actions as would be distributed by man according as gratified or angry; he will inculcate the opinions of those affections in the Deity. If he knows that unbecoming notions of God must introduce disquietude, disorder, and unhappiness among mankind; he will describe him as extremely jealous of his glory. If he observes that ample provision is made for the wants, conveniences, and enjoyments of the creatures; he will paint him as a kind and indulgent parent. If he finds reason to believe that every evil terminates in greater good; he will delineate him compassionate and tender, remembering mercy in judgment, correcting for our benefit. If he perceives the laws of nature steadfast, not to be broken through; he figures him a resolute governor and inflexible judge. If he experiences our industry and spirits rise in proportion as we can fancy ourselves of importance to the person upon whose account we exert them; he tries to work a persuasion of God being desirous of our services, delighted with our gratitude, solicitous for our well-being, earnest to have us conduct ourselves wisely, disappointed at our deserting him, grieved at our disrespect, troubled to see us run into mischief, and anxious to prevent our misconduct. And so of the rest: employing the springs of imagination to effect that very temper of mind and tenor of conduct, which the most refined reason and extensive understanding would recommend, upon the contemplation of nature, expedience, and rectitude.

4. Therefore he neither prevaricates with others nor practises double dealing himself, by using one set of doctrines for the closet, and another for the world. For both contain the same matter and conduce to the same point; the latter being no more than a version from the long-winded, uni-

form, correct, refined language of philosophy, into the concise, loose, figurative, fluctuating manner of expression, fit for common discourse. It has been shown upon several occasions before, that reason has not the immediate command of our active powers, which are conducted by affections and desires whose views, being short and confined, turn from time to time upon certain marks of pursuit hanging just before them, and we, being so constantly habituated to this state of mind in ourselves, cannot ordinarily comprehend otherwise even of God himself. Wherefore we are excusable in practising this manner of comprehension, provided we render it as refined and celestial as our imagination will bear, striving to exclude all impurities or gross commixtures that can possibly be spared without leaving the idea too thin to be sensible. And this possibility is relative to times and persons: for when bodily disorders obscure our faculties, when the hurry of business leaves no room for reflection, if our talents be small, our education low, our profession or converse confining us to vulgar objects, we shall not be able to raise them above gross and sensible ideas. Therefore that conception is pure and clean to every man, which is the purest and cleanest he can entertain.

For my part, when I reflect that it is possible I may outlive my own understanding, as they say Sir Isaac Newton did, to whom his own theorems became unintelligible mysteries, or be debilitated in my faculties by some paralytic disorder; I cannot expect to have the benefit of what little refinements I have made shift to spin out in the foregoing sheets: therefore am desirous of laying up a stock of such sentiments, as I can then retain to be my comfort in my second childhood. And when I consider how many people are occupied in the lowest offices of life, who with the care and opportunities afforded me, might perhaps have run greater lengths than I can pretend to; I cannot content myself with framing speculations for the amusement of such only as were brought up at the university, without thinking of the peasant, the labourer, and the cookmaid.

Yet the imagination may be made susceptible of pure ideas gradually, but it cannot be done hastily nor by violence, nor pouring more at once into the vessel than it will take: so the business is to observe every little step that may be made in the approach towards the state whereinto we would bring it. If men of thought would take care to agree a little better among themselves, they would find much might be done upon the vulgar by general consent and example. Of which we have sufficient experience in the difference between the present world and the ancient: for they could not do without images, sacrifices, numerous rites and corporeal ingredients in their idea of the Deity, which are now wholly banished from the lowest of our people.

5. Yet are we still liable unthinkingly to fall into little artifices for working upon the divine affections, as we work upon one another. The child finds it can prevail upon its mother's fondness by fretfulness and complaining: so we murmur and grumble against Providence, and fret when things fall out contrary to our liking. We can sometimes influence our fellow-creatures by our estimation of their conduct, and shame them out of their inobservance of us by taking it in dudgeon: so we arraign the justice of God, pass our censure upon his proceedings, and take it amiss that less righteous and less deserving people are better dealt with than ourselves: on the other hand, we may win upon one another by expressions of our good opinion and readiness to oblige: so we expect to raise a fondness in God by our oblations, our assiduities, our uncommon zeal in his service.

and flattering him in our thoughts, persuading ourselves that we see a rectitude and wisdom in dispensation where we really do not.

This timorousness of offending the divine delicacy, as I may call it, has proved a main obstacle against true freedom of thought, and improvement as well in science as belief. For because our friends may be disgusted with us for an unseasonable sincerity, and soothed by politeness and complaisance: therefore we dare not examine our own thoughts impartially, for fear God should see them at the same time, and take distaste at them. But if we have any latent scruple or infidelity within us, it is in vain to dissemble with the Searcher of hearts, and highly expedient for ourselves that we should know it: for unless the distemper be discovered, there is no applying remedies for the cure of it.

Nevertheless, a man may sometimes be brought into an opinion by persuading himself that he has it, or got rid of a misapprehension by forbearing to contemplate it; and the state of our bodily humours, or unfavourable circumstances, will now and then raise a temporary notion that is not our settled opinion: in which cases there is no better way than to banish what disturbs us from our reflection, or reserve it for a more favourable season of calmer and clearer judgment: for there are some sores that may be made to heal themselves only by keeping them covered from the air. So that there is a discretion to be observed upon this article, as well as all others relating to the purity of our ideas: something gross and human we must mingle in our conceptions of God, because it is unavoidable, and more we must not mingle than is unavoidable.

Therefore it is a very nice point to distinguish exactly what is necessary to give a solid body to our Religion, that it may not evaporate, yet without retaining a single particle more of *caput mortuum* than requisite to fix the spirit: as likewise to discern what is necessary for other people, though mischievous and improper for ourselves. Herein lies the great difficulty in modelling the popular or exoteric doctrines, so that while all agree in outward form or profession, each may hold them in the utmost degree of purity whereof he is respectively capable. And this being a matter of equal importance and nicety, it becomes us daily to purify our conceptions, and enlarge them so far as they can bear: for in so doing we shall purify our conduct, and secure a steady, unruffled serenity of mind.

6. But there is still another branch of purity, which consists in separating our idea of God from all external objects of nastiness and impurity: and here the exoteric doctrine runs directly contrary to the esoteric. For the latter describes him omnipresent and omniscient, filling the whole immensity of space, beholding all his works and their works without exception: alike present in the kitchen as in the chapel, at the hog-sty as at the sacred altar; observing us in our follies as well as our serious employments; alike attentive to us in our necessary uncleanness as in our fervent devotions. I should here, according to my ordinary method, particularize in some striking instances, where we could not reasonably exclude the divine presence, nor observance: but I refrain, lest, while I labour to convince the understanding, I might shock the imagination. But whoever will cast a momentary glance upon what his own reflection may suggest, will instantly feel how inexpedient it is to entertain conceptions of everything we know to be true, and how necessary to provide one system for the closet, and another for our familiar use.

For we are not to conceit ourselves that we carry the real essences even of common things in our minds, much less of the most excellent and

glorious of all Beings: we apprehend them only in types and colours drawn out upon our sensory. It has been observed before that the God we worship is no more than an idol framed out of human materials, picked up from our own composition. Therefore though the divine Essence be more than Ithuriel's spear, incapable of defilement by any ordures, however surrounded or intimately penetrated by it, and being nauseated or any ways affected by any objects however disgustful or loathsome: yet the idea in our imagination may be polluted by filthiness clinging to it. Such then being the case, and it having pleased God to subject us to some base employments and offensive objects we cannot avoid: it behoves us to lay aside every idea of that sort when we think of him. Which shows the extravagance of those enthusiasts, who exhort us literally to have God always in our thoughts, and do every action of our lives with intention to please him: because this must continually draw us into gross offences against his purity. For if every time we shifted or washed our hands, or cut our corns, or did other things I do not care to name, we were to do them with direct intention to please him; it would be more likely to debase and contaminate than ennoble and sanctify our minds, to degrade him below ourselves, than raise us to a nearer resemblance with him.

7. And as the grossness of our imaginations obliges us to exclude our idea of God from certain places unsuitable for his reception: so the narrowness of them compels us to confine him to some particular place of residence. For omnipresence is by much too large an idea for our comprehensions to grasp; we cannot conceive an immensity of space, much less the thought of one uncompounded individual Being; existent throughout the whole capaciousness of space. For we take our notions of magnitude from body which occupies a larger or smaller room, in proportion to the quantity of matter, or number of parts contained in it, or the distance whereto they are stretched from one another: and with respect to the presence of perceptive Beings we distinguish between that and the place of their existence; for while standing in one spot, we apprehend everything done in our presence, that passes within a compass wherein we can discern it distinctly. Our imagination being habituated to this manner of conception by the objects wherewith we are continually conversant, we cannot cast it into any other form when we contemplate the supreme Being; to whom therefore we assign a peculiar habitation, yet extending his presence beyond the place of his existence.

But because we ourselves cannot be present in one place without being absent from others, and become familiarized to things appearing continually in our presence, it would vilify, and, I may say, vulgarize the Almighty, to imagine him resident among ourselves, and what must follow of course in our thoughts engaged among the trifling scenes that occupy our notice. Therefore we say God is in heaven and we upon earth, that he dwells in the heaven of heavens, in the centre of inaccessible light. Now it is no matter where we suppose this heaven to be, whether above the clouds, or in the ether, or supercelestial regions, it were better not to examine the point too minutely, but leave every one at liberty to place it where he finds most convenient to his own imagination; only taking care to fix it in some spot from whence the ever-wakeful eye of Providence may behold distinctly all the concerns of the earth, the courses of nature, the workings of fortune, the secret chambers of darkness, and inmost recesses of the human heart.

8. This limited imagination of the Deity renders him capable of locomotion (an article that can never find admittance in the esotoric creed: so

that he can go forth to plan out the spaces for a new world, to lay the foundations of the steadfast mountains, to set bounds to the restless ocean, to clothe ground with all the variety of vegetables, to give command to his elements and seasons by the word of his mouth, and to survey his works with complacence, beholding them very good. Nor will it be incongruous to represent him descending upon great occasions to interfere in the administration of affairs below: riding in whirlwinds, upheaving redundant seas, shaking the solid ground with earthquakes, rending the heavens with tremendous thunders, turning the scale of victory, rescuing nations from destruction, giving the turn to critical events, determining the fall of kingdoms. For there cannot be an operation without an immediate presence of the agent, nor can our narrow minds conceive him present in an unusual place without a removal from his ordinary residence: but our thoughts are too busied in seasons of extraordinary events to reflect that a presence in one place implies an absence from elsewhere.

And it will be expedient for the like reason to apprehend him peculiarly present at some certain times and places, when we withdraw from our usual scenes and occupations; for then it will rather raise than sully our imaginations: but of this I may have occasion to treat more particularly in some succeeding chapter. If any one shall find these images too gross for his use, he will do right to refuse them admittance: but as the best of us have something vulgar in our composition, we may employ some popular ideas without hurt to the purity of our refined theory; and we shall reap this advantage from bringing ourselves acquainted with the management of them, that we shall be better able to help our neighbours by preventing them from falling into a grossness they can avoid. And an open-hearted, truly benevolent man will strive to think as well as act, not for himself alone, but for the benefit of as many as he can do service to either way.

CHAP. IV.

MAJESTY.

The very notion of a self-existent Being, the Creator and Governor of all things, carries in it an idea of greatness and pre-eminence beyond comparison. For the existence, the powers, and privileges of all other substances being derived originally from him, whatever they possess must have been contained in the fountain from whence they derived, which could not give better things than it had to bestow. So that all we see great, or noble, or admirable, or excellent among the creatures, resides collectively in the Author of their natures. And as our knowledge stands confined within a very small part of his works, we see nothing of those excellencies and subjects of admiration which lie beyond our notice. Nor, could we survey the whole stupendous fabric completely, have we reason to believe but that there are greater riches of power and glory than stand exemplified in any district of the universe: for we have found in the former part of our progress, that the business of creation requires other Attributes than those hitherto known to the Sons of Adam.

The same notion too, besides intrinsic greatness and excellence, implies uncontrollable Authority and absolute Dominion: for the creatures subsisting at first by the will of their Creator, how stable a constitution soever they may have received, can subsist no longer than that Will shall permit. He

that gave can take away, and what originally created can station, compound, alter or dispose as seemeth good: there being nothing more powerful to limit, nor superior to lay an obligation upon him. These points are too evident to be much enlarged upon, for it is the difficulties and obscurities in a subject that give scope to argument and illustration. And they are too luminous and magnificent to be contemplated by us, for a redundance of light is as unfit for our optics as a defect of it; nor can we discern anything distinctly of very large objects until removed to a distance that may contract them within the circle of our vision.

Therefore as we see the sun better through a smoked glass or in a pail of water than by looking at him directly, so we can more easily discern the power and glory of God, through the veil of second causes, or by reflection in his works, or in the ministry of inferior powers executing his commands, than by contemplating him in his essence or immediate operations: for which reason he is often represented as acting by his subordinate ministers, sending his destroying or protecting Angel to spread desolation, pestilence, and famine, or to guard the righteous from danger, and guide his steps that he hurt not his foot against a stone.

2. But all this relates only to his almighty power and the essential perfection of his nature, but will not conduct us to his Attribute of Majesty: which is one of the moral Attributes, whereby we suppose him withholden from works and objects unbecoming the dignity of his character. And here again our exoterics will run directly opposite to our esoterics, for our reason, when stretching her eye to the utmost verge of contemplation, represents him omnipresent, intelligent, and powerful in every mathematical point, throughout the whole immensity of space. That nothing, not the minutest object, escapes his notice, nor the most trifling incident eludes his care. That all things being the work of his hands, are good, and of importance in the stations wherein he has respectively placed them, therefore none are unbecoming his attention. That he orders, disposes, and provides for them all, their situations, assortments, motions, and operations without exception: for no multiplicity of business can distract him, but he has vigour and understanding to spare for the most insignificant, without descending from his dignity, or intermitting the most glorious of his works.

But this is by much too large a field to be drawn upon any scale in our imagination; if we reflect ever so little upon the diversity of characters, humours, and interests among mankind, the various instincts, natures, and properties of animals, the infinite multitude of diversely qualified particles floating about in air, earth, and ocean; the number, intricacy, and imperceptible influence of causes affecting almost every event befalling us; we shall quickly bewilder ourselves, and find it beyond all conception to apprehend all these reduced under a regular direction and comprised in one uniform plan. Therefore it were in vain to attempt it, and we had best take our exoteric idea from some archetype we can find in ourselves more familiar to our experience.

3. Now we find our capacities circumscribed within a certain compass, straitened in our knowledge, and limited in our powers; we have a sphere of action extending but little way beyond ourselves, changing as we move, so that if we go to employ our activity upon things at a distance, we lose the reach of those we left behind: and though our sphere may contain many subjects, we cannot act upon them all, but only have our option to exert ourselves upon one, or a few among the rest; nor can we do our business effectually without applying our whole attention to the present thing we

take in hand. We likewise receive assistance in our operations from habit and practice, which give an ease and inclination to the courses whereto we have been familiarized, and render us awkward and unable to make a progress in those from which they have kept us strangers.

Hence it becomes necessary to make a selection among the objects before us, and our abilities being scanty, to lay them out where they may turn to the greatest profit. And as we have motives of honour as well as advantage to influence us, it is unbecoming to employ ourselves in mean and trivial matters, in preference to the more valuable and excellent. Yet is this excellence in some cases relative, for though there be many ways of spending time which are below any reasonable creature to take, there are works necessary and convenient in life, which therefore cannot be base, and unbecoming in themselves, it being the Duty of some to undergo them, yet are unworthy the attention of others who are called to higher services. For we are placed in different stations upon earth, we have different employments to follow, different habits and inclinations to encourage for forwarding us in the performance of them. Therefore it would be a demeaning himself for a person in high station to bestow his thoughts and industry upon matters belonging to those of lower degree: because he could not do this without omitting the functions incumbent upon him to fulfil, and contracting tastes unsuitable to his character.

And that this is what makes such condescension a debasement of dignity, may appear from hence: because where a man can concern himself with trifles at intervals, and converse among the vulgar upon particular occasions without taking off his thoughts from higher matters, without interfering with the proper functions of his station, or interrupting his intercourse among his equals, it is never deemed to fix a speck of blemish upon his character; more especially where necessary for his health or recreation of spirits, or conducive to some important use. Tully tells us that Scipio and Lælius, the two greatest men of the greatest nation upon earth, used in their country retirements to busy themselves in picking cockle shells and pebbles upon the shore, and stoop to all kinds of innocent puerilities; nor are affability and condescension esteemed less than ornaments to a nobleman.

The Czar Peter the Great is said to have served as a common sailor in the Dutch Navy, and worked with a hatchet among the carpenters in our dock-yards; but then he had in view the improvement of his own marine by perfecting himself in all the branches of it: so these vile occupations did not take off his thoughts from the proper functions of his imperial office, nor did they weaken but rather tend to establish his title of Great. The subaltern, when raised by degrees to a commander in chief, must lay aside those offices it was his praise to be punctual in executing before; such as visiting the quarters, inspecting the firelocks, hearing complaints, and preventing quarrels among the private men: because he has other business to take care of, not more important in itself, for, unless things be rightly ordered among the private men, the army will be capable of but little service, but more important for him to regard. For this reason it is beneath persons in extensive trusts to concern themselves with minute matters: it is their part to confine their attention to general regulations, as being enough to take up the whole of it: nor can they execute otherwise than by the ministry of inferiors, without descending from their point of eminence, from whence they may direct and oversee much greater works than they could complete by their own industry.

But a ruler, to execute by his inferiors, must have their due submission

and ready obedience, which depend in great measure upon the sentiments they entertain of his person; for men are but sensitivo-rational animals, actuated for the most part by sense and imagination, which alone give us a readiness in our performances: nor will duty, advantage, or fear of punishment, answer completely without a reverential esteem and admiration. But imagination is guided by appearances, which consequently deserve his attention: therefore he will keep a state, go surrounded with attendants, affect a ceremony and solemnity, assume a grandeur of deportment and expression suitable to his rank, so far but no further than needful to impress the requisite degree of respect upon the populace; and he will disdain every little action or gesture that might degrade or make him cheap in their estimation.

4. This then being the constant course of experience in human affairs, wherein there is an allotment of offices and occupations; those destined to the highest, looking upon it as a degradation to meddle in the inferior, marked out from among the multitude by external distinctions of equipage, ceremony, magnificence, dress, and demeanour: and the works of industry being carried on by numbers, using powers and capacities of their own under the direction of one who contributes nothing more than his direction; our imagination falls so strongly into that train, that we can never get it to run in any other, without an immediate force and violence put upon it by the utmost stretch of our understanding, which we no sooner take off than it constantly recoils again.

Therefore when we let our thoughts roam upon external nature, an idea of the like polity immediately occurs: we conceive the elements, the seeds of vegetables, the salts, the acids, the spirit contained in them, to have an activity of their own; we imagine chance an operating power producing events, and freewill taking a direction for which there were no causes existent before their operation; we presume general laws provided for the maintenance of order, and regulating the Sum of Affairs without descending to minute cases, too numerous to be comprised in any code; we suppose God, the King of nature, seated upon his imperial throne, somewhere above the fogs and vapours of this loathsome earth, environed with ineffable glory, surrounded by hosts of Angels, Archangels, Seraphs, Cherubs, Principalities and powers awaiting his command, by whose ministry he has the disposal of second causes at a distance, or by an inexpressible energy communicated thereto in a manner there is no occasion for us to examine too strictly.

In this way we apprehend him continually making fresh provision for correcting the errors of chance and disorders of freewill, governing like an earthly monarch by new edicts and new application of his power, executed by ministers he employs. If we allow him to regard particular events, this is only upon extraordinary occasions, when they draw consequences of great importance after them: such as the fate of empires, the success of battles, the salvation of a soul, or preservation of a human life. This being the constant strain of our discourses shows that we cannot easily cast our thoughts into any other form: and as men continually speak of the divine operations in figurative expressions, they must of course apprehend them bearing a similitude with the figures they employ. For as in reading a romance or a poem, we take a temporary persuasion of their being real facts, and of our conversing among the persons and scenes they represent: so the perpetual use of allegory will assimilate the mind to the train of conceptions it conveys.

5. Now since our imagination is so habituated to conceptions of this kind, that it becomes impracticable to impress others of an opposite cast, so as to carry them about with us for our ordinary use; we must model our common system of providence accordingly, complying with necessity, and humouring the imperfection of our nature which we cannot mend. And as we can never totally get rid of chance and trifle in our thoughts, but many things seem to pass around us merely casual and utterly insignificant, such will necessarily appear themselves, and render the agents concerned in them contemptible in our eyes. On the other hand, the capacity and management of great affairs give us an idea of dignity, which rises in proportion to the importance of employments occupying an Agent or pre-eminence above other powers subordinate; and is hurt by the junction of anything mean, or trivial.

Since then it is of the utmost consequence, as well to the right condition of our minds as the regularity of our conduct, to entertain an awful and reverential notion of the Almighty, as having power to dispose of all events, and supreme Governor over all creatures: it behoves us to ascribe to him an Attribute of Majesty, to conceive him jealous of his glory, expecting our obedience and adoration; to remove every trifling event and mean object from our thoughts when we have him in them; and to raise our idea of him, by such images as are suitable to the highest degree, that the weakness and grossness of our faculties will admit. For as we observed before under the article of Purity, though the essence of God be incapable of actual defilement by any filthiness co-existent in the same place with it, yet the idea of him in our hearts may be polluted and rusted over by impurities adhering thereto: so although his omnipresent power cannot be degraded nor his attention engrossed by any operation, but that he may govern events seemingly the most insignificant without descending from his government of worlds and hierarchies, yet the same idea may be degraded by joining it with such minute employments; for that is far from being omnipresent, though the original it was designed to represent be so. For our attention being confined to the spot we think on, we cannot apprehend him attentive to trifles without taking off his eye from what appear, to us, the proper functions of his divine Majesty.

Nevertheless, we may safely apprehend him interposing upon extraordinary occasions, for so we see our princes and great men do without lessening their dignity: or taking care of our particular concerns, for we are always of vast importance to ourselves; and what concerns us nearly engaging the mind deeply, serves rather to elevate than depress our idea of the cause operating towards it.

6. Thus in opinions relative to the Attribute of Majesty it is more requisite to regulate them by our own nature than the divine, and carefully avoid whatever might appear injurious to it in our own apprehension, however agreeable to our esoteric reasonings. Therefore here, as before in treating of Purity, we shall often find it expedient to conceive all things otherwise than we know them to be. And we practise the like reserve with respect to those whom we esteem upon earth; we know the greatest men must change their linen, wash their hands, pare their nails, and stoop to other base offices reckoned shameful in nature: yet to dwell upon these thoughts would lessen our reverence of their persons. So we have seen in our Chapter of Providence how the greatest events are liable to be influenced by the smallest, so that the accomplishment of them cannot be se-

cured, if the little particles of earth, air, and vapour, the instincts of animals, or fancies of human creatures, be suffered to run at random.

A grain of dust falling in a man's eye while fighting, may prove his destruction: a few particles of rust upon a firelock, or of damp in the pan, may save a life: a wasp missing his hold in crawling up the sides of a pot, may fall in to be drank by one, whom he shall sting to death; a young lady by a lucky assortment of her ribands, may procure entrance into a family where she shall become the mother of heroes; yet we cannot without impiety imagine God following the single atoms of terrene or aqueous matter as they float about in the air, watching his opportunity to trip up the feet of a crawling insect, or attending a giddy girl when she adjusts her dress at the toilet. We know, both from reason and authority, that of two sparrows that are sold for a farthing, not one falleth to the ground without our heavenly Father, and the hairs of our head are all numbered: yet what pious man, if upon combing his head he meets with a tangle that tears off two or three hairs, or if a cat should happen to catch his favourite sparrow, would ascribe these catastrophes to the hand of Providence? Who would not be shocked at the profaneness of one, who, upon finding only the tail of a mouse in his trap, or upon losing a flea that he had hunted after, should say, it was the Will of God they should escape?

7. It is possible indeed by frequently comparing our esoteric ideas with the exoteric, and observing how they tend ultimately to the same point, so to familiarize them to our imagination, as that we may entertain them without abating of the reverence we ought always to preserve. This I may testify upon my own experience, having by practice brought several speculations to lie easy and inoffensive in my thoughts, which would have appeared uncouth, disturbing, and perplexing to them formerly, and may still do so to other people. But this must be an effect of time and careful digestion: for imagination works by habitual associations and trains, which when running in very different courses must have many channels of communication worked between to make them coincide. In the prosecution of this attempt, great vigilance must be used not to admit any thing derogatory to our idea of the divine Majesty, which we must endeavour to keep steady, solid, and connected in all its parts; and I believe, when doubts and perplexities do arise, it is owing to the fluctuation of our ideas, insinuating some speck of human passion or imbecility thereinto, unawares.

After the imagination has been thus gradually cast into a new arrangement, it will become as averse to some of the old ideas, as it was at first to the present: finding the divine Majesty debased by that partiality and favour, that indignation and abhorrence, that peremptoriness of command, earnest expectation of worship, alteration of measures upon occurrences happening, judgment of characters upon observation of their conduct; which are so necessary for raising it with the generality. For they see the best and greatest of men preferring their friends and favourites, indignant at affronts, detesting villanies, commanding merely to exercise their authority, pleased with homage, varying their schemes according to circumstances, taking their estimation of persons from their outward behaviour: nor do they discern that all this springs from the imperfection of human nature; so that in their apprehension it may well join with the idea of incomparable excellence. Thus the imaginations of mankind being differently modelled, and that in great variety of forms, regard must be had not only to the general turn, but to particular characters, so as to improve the idea of Majesty in each, by such way as may prove most effectual.

But an excess of colouring may be as hurtful as a defect: when the strokes are laid on too thick they obscure, rather than illuminate the figure. By conceiving our continual Services agreeable to God, as his rightful due, we raise our idea of him: but by representing them as giving him a real pleasure, we make ourselves of importance to him, and consequently degrade him in our thoughts. By requiring an unreserved obedience to his commands without knowing their expedience, we acknowledge his sovereign authority: but by supposing they have none other foundation than his arbitrary Will, we depreciate the grandeur of his wisdom and bounty. And in many other duties it is a very nice point to distinguish how they may be stretched to the utmost without being overstrained: for an extension beyond this point would unavoidably beget narrowness, instead of an enlargement of Mind. This then being an important as well as delicate point, it behoves all who have the guidance and instruction of others, to be cautious of urging their topics too strongly; lest by an indiscreet zeal they leave things in worse condition than they found them, and teach men to place the glory of God in matters that would cast a discredit upon the character of an earthly creature.

8. Such indiscretion abounds to profusion among enthusiasts, who would have us keep up a glowing admiration of the divine excellencies at our work, in our play, during our meals, and for many hours of tedious devotion. But they do not consider that admiration is an extraordinary stretch of the mind which it cannot exert at all times, nor keep up beyond a certain period, when the spirits will be exhausted, the mental eye grow languid, and if still persisting to hold an object however luminous in contemplation, will see it obscure, unstriking, and no better than common objects. Accordingly we hear them complain of frequent coolness, aridities, and desertions; wherein they do no great honour to God in ascribing the natural defects of human weakness to a kind of turn of humour in him, who one hour shows them extraordinary favours above all mankind, and the next deserts them without any reason.

Neither would it avail for our purpose, were it practicable to retain God in our thoughts through all our little Occupations, and do everything for his service; were a man to change his coat, tie up his garters, or gather a nosegay in his garden, always to please God, it would diminish rather than add to the reverence of his name. For by perpetually mingling terms of Religion among our common ideas and discourses, we shall empty them of all their solemnity, and reduce them to mere Cant, a word derived from the Latin of singing, when people usually attend to the music without heeding the sense. And that your over-righteous people have served them so, appears from their introducing them by head and shoulders upon occasions whereto they cannot be applicable. This humour prevailing generally among our forefathers in the times of both civil and religious anarchy, begot the contrary extreme, as it is called, of profane swearing, and burlesquing everything serious: though it seems to me a similar offspring, like the viper's brood, destroying its parent, only that it might have the doing of the same mischief itself, being the like expedient for evaporating all idea from the most significant words in our language.

But the divine Majesty, when rightly apprehended, undebased with allaying mixtures, being the idea which contributes most effectually to ennoble our thoughts, to keep our conduct steady, and strengthen our dependence under unfavourable circumstances, deserves our best care and judgment to improve it. Which is properest done at those seasons when our thoughts

are fresh, our minds most vigorous, and our understandings clearest, when contemplation is ready to flow spontaneously: by frequent efforts at such times we may fix a deep impression, not to start up incessantly, but upon occasion. For as a Man who has a steady loyalty to his prince, though he does not think of him every moment, yet will instantly fire upon hearing anything spoken disrespectfully against him: so he that possesses an habitual reverence of the divine Majesty, though it may not operate directly upon every minute action of his life, yet whatever injurious thereto offers to his thoughts, will immediately give him an alarm.

CHAP. V.

HOLINESS.

Holiness, in its greatest latitude, implies an exemption from all tastes desires, and trains of thought, excited in us by our corporeal appetites or the allurement of sensible objects. Now this exemption in ourselves can be no more than temporary: for our situation here upon earth renders it necessary and our duty to have continual intercourse among the things external round about us, and the constitution of our nature obliges us to attend to the calls of Bodily appetite. While busied in these occupations, our conduct is not holy, neither is it yet profane, but in a middle state of indifference between both; but we are not so tied down to external objects or the imaginations springing from thence, but that we may sometimes separate everything of that kind from our thoughts, in order to contemplate the constitution of universal nature and character of its Author, to consider ourselves as citizens of the world, inheritors of a country where nothing terrene or carnal finds place.

Now it is this separation from ordinary conjunctions that constitutes the idea of holiness; for places are holy when separated from all common uses and reserved for our reception, when we assemble to raise our minds above sublunary scenes. Rites, ceremonies, and institutions are holy, when contrived to turn imagination out of her familiar courses, and introduce a solemnity suitable for religious purposes. Holy vestments and utensils are those employed only in sacred offices. Holy days are those set apart for the attendance upon our spiritual concerns. And men are called holy and divine, who make it their profession to study and practise the methods of leading their fellow-creatures into just notions of their Maker, and of their duties as well towards him as themselves, and their neighbours.

Thus holiness bears a near affinity with the subjects handled in the two last Chapters: as not consisting with a mixture of anything foul or unbecoming, mean, or trivial. But some things are relatively so according to times and circumstances: for many thoughts and actions would defile and debase the mind in seasons of devotion, that may be innocent and commendable at other seasons. These things indulged too much, or improperly, obscure and stupefy the faculties, but do not pervert them; they clog the mind, but do not clip its wings; as some other practices do, which therefore are denominated wicked, as rendering it incapable of rising to a holy disposition, at any season.

2. Therefore holiness in a more restrained sense stands opposed to moral

impurity, which taints and fixes a lasting blemish upon the mind: when vice becomes a part of the character, and is adopted for a principle of action. For as in the Body there is a difference between mere weakness and disease; the one may subject to some inconveniences, but does not vitiate the blood and juices, nor corrupt the solids, nor contain what is putrid and noisome, like the other. So in the mental system, infirmity is not the same with disorder; the one can affect only the outward actions, whereas the other seizes upon the will; the one misleads and surprises, while the other depraves. The best men have their weak and unguarded hours, wherein they act unwarrantably through the prevalence of their desires, which are all of the natural kind, and become faulty only by their excess: though during these intervals, they depart from their holiness, yet as soon as the impulse is over, their former tenor and disposition returns again, so they do not lose their character of holy, any more than a man loses his character of a musician, by having his instrument withholden from him for a while.

But there are other desires, malignant and vicious, not springing from nature, but generated by evil habits and perverse management, never innocent, because corrupt in kind, rather than excessive in degree: such as envy, rancour, malice, injustice, cruelty, pride, rapaciousness, sordid selfishness, and the like. To which we may add, such excess of the natural desires as have gotten so strong hold of the heart as to be cherished there with conscious complacence, even when their proper objects do not solicit; as sensuality, debauchery, unlawful gallantries, fondness of pleasure, and idleness.

All these being become habituated to the mind, strike so strong root there, as to change and deprave it in character, rendering it incapable of taking a holy disposition, because perpetually casting up ideas incompatible therewith. For this reason it is incumbent upon us to stand always upon the watch, to prevent our infirmities from becoming diseases, our necessary desires from growing excessive and gaining an habitual fondness, our passions, ill treatment from others, cross accidents, unequal distributions of Providence, custom, example, or company, from drawing us insensibly into desires unnatural, and essentially evil.

3. But when we cast up our eyes to the Supreme Being, we shall see at first glance there is no occasion for an Attribute of holiness, to keep him watchful against mischiefs that cannot befall him. For he has no wants which might require appetites urging to supply them, no natural desires that might rise to excess, and become habitual, no passions to beguile, errors to mislead, influence of custom or company to pervert him: he cannot grudge the blessings himself has bestowed, repine at the dispensations he has made, become soured by accidents which are none to him, grow proud at excelling the works of his hands, nor harbour malice for injuries that cannot hurt him. Therefore holiness in him is no more than a negation of those moral impurities, whereto our nature lies liable: and I believe there is nobody who will not readily acknowledge, that everything of this kind ought to be excluded from our idea of God.

Nevertheless, as I observed before, we take our lineaments of the sublimest objects from archetypes found within ourselves; and vice has such a bewitching art of disguising, as to make us mistake her for virtue and holiness; so that without careful attention, she will palm her own odious features upon us for excellencies, and draw us insensibly to give them a place in that which ought to be all perfection. Thus we find the heathen world in general ascribed sensuality, debauchery, competition, pride, envy, jealousy,

inveteracy, injustice, animosity, cruelty, and other moral impurities, to their heavenly powers, whom yet they supposed elevated above the reach of human imperfection: nor did they perceive any inconsistency herein, because they regarded those dispositions as no blemish nor mark of unholiness in the moral character.

Mankind is now happily altered for the better in this respect; the least enlightened among us acknowledge the unity and spirituality of the Godhead. So there is no room for sensuality, where there are no corporeal members to be employed as instruments therein: no place for inordinate excesses of desire, where there is neither Nectar, nor Ambrosia, nor other necessary allurement to excite a natural appetite: no competition, envy, nor jealousy in a single substance, who has none other to contend with, to rival, or to suspect: no pride without an object to be set in comparison: no rancour or animosity where there is nothing to resist the Will: no injustice in him who could not be profited thereby: no hatred in one whom an enemy cannot hurt nor obstruct: no abhorrence or detestation of things which were the work of his own hand.

This is now so clearly understood by everybody, that we never knowingly admit any mixture of moral foulness or human weakness into our idea of the Divine character. Yet whoever will observe the discourses and apprehensions of the men and women he commonly meets with, may observe some of those blemishes have crept in imperceptibly, and that by means of notions which were innocent and necessary at first, but have corrupted and perished by passing through our hands. Nor is the mischief unfrequently increased by the indiscretion of some zealous teachers, who being not sufficiently guarded in their thoughts at all points, pursue a favourite notion to extravagant lengths, until they run it down into abjectness and absurdity.

4. It is proper that virtue should be represented as agreeable in the eyes of God, and whatever is done in support of his honour and religion, in relief of his servants, or for the discouragement of wickedness, as done for his service; because this tends to urge and hearten us in the prosecution of our duty: but it is carrying the matter too far when we make ourselves of importance to him, or fancy we can steal away his affections from our fellow-creatures, to do him a real service, or strengthen his hands to overcome his enemies.

It is expedient we should look upon things seemingly indifferent in themselves as obligatory when enjoined by him, for we are not to dispute his commands because we do not discern the reasonableness of them; but to imagine him giving arbitrary commands which have no foundation whatever in reason, or to be delighted with unavailing expressions of homage tending to no benefit either of our own or our fellow-creatures, introduces a littleness and unworthiness into our idea of him.

While we endeavour to raise our minds to the highest sense of his power, his goodness, and his glory they can attain, we do well; but when we strive to disguise our real thoughts, for fear of offending him, or use fallacious arguments in support of his honour, we shall fall into an apprehension of him as being ceremonious and captious, liable to be imposed upon by flattery, and taken with compliment.

In apprehending the actions and concerns of men to lie under the continual inspection and conduct of his Providence, we do no more than is agreeable to sound reason and truth; but if we suppose the eye of Providence engrossed by particular persons in disregard of the common herd, and anxiously attentive to their minute occasions, so far as to provide a

lodging for Whitefield, or preserve his horse from stumbling, we ascribe to him the weak fondness and narrow understanding of human nature.

Nothing more ennobles and refines the mind than an unabating love of God, the stronger the better, so it be manly and decent, operating by a reverential dependence upon his protection, a full confidence in his mercy, and a perfect acquiescence in the dispensations of his Providence, as believing them to terminate ultimately in our good; but as this affection is overstrained by enthusiasts and devotees in a language unsuitable to it, when they talk of the soul pouring forth in pious breathings and transports, with their dear Lord, and sweet Jesus, they leave nothing noble nor heavenly in it; but court the Almighty in the same sentiments they would court a mistress, and mingle their own passions, those too not of the purest kind, in their idea of the most holy.

It is requisite that wickedness should be represented as odious to him, and the persons immersed in it as living at enmity against him, because this may raise a horror of it in ourselves, and preserve us against catching the contagion from those who are deeply infected with it; but when this notion carries men to hate and detest, to vex and destroy one another for his sake, it is making him vindictive, rancorous, and cruel, and fastening a moral impurity upon him which any good man would be ashamed of. Thus there is a caution to be used in the management of the very topics employed to bring men into a holiness of temper; for, with a very little indiscretion, they may be made like other best things, which when corrupted become the worst.

5. For as we have remarked several times before, our ideas of the Divine character are all taken from archetypes found in our own, because we have none others wherefrom to describe anything conceivable to our imagination. Hence it follows that our materials being defective, we can carry on the resemblance but a little way, without changing them, and employing new ones, oftentimes of a directly opposite colour, which being taken notice of by the unwary, who do not observe the necessity and occasion of it, involves them in perplexities and contradictions.

Perhaps this is nowhere more apparent than in the doctrine of Providence, which whoever holds, must acknowledge to have the disposal of the machinations and actions of men, as well as all other events: and in our two chapters upon that article, and upon Freewill, we have laid down, that every minute motion, both in the human breast and among the bodies around us, was comprised and noticed in the plan of Providence. I would not then point out the consequences that might be drawn from this universal provision of causes, being unwilling to scandalize anybody before I was ready to remove his scruples. If the candid reader has hitherto overlooked these consequences, it is so much the better; yet as we cannot expect but they will occur to him some time or other, it is incumbent upon us to prepare the antidote; and conceiving this the proper place for so doing, we shall not scruple to discover the poison, which is that we may seem to have made God the Author of sin.

For if all the follies and wickedness of mankind were owing to motives suggested by modifications of their organs, depending in a chain of certain effects upon the operations of the Almighty, then he must be esteemed the author and approver of those follies and wickedness, for which he made the provision of causes with knowledge and intention of the evil fruits they should produce: which to imagine, would be the highest offence against his holiness and justice, as representing the worst of crimes approved of by him,

and punishment inflicted for faults whereunto he had led the transgressor by the workings of his providence. Besides, as we have all along insisted upon a difference in actions, some drawing down the blessings and others the vengeance of Heaven upon our heads, we contradict ourselves egregiously in maintaining an opinion from whence it may be inferred that the most atrocious villanies are equally agreeable to God, and alike the object of his counsels, with the most consummate virtues. But this crying injury to his holy name we shall use our best endeavours to prevent, and at the same time to reconcile the contradictions charged upon our system.

6. Now in order to do this, let us endeavour to lay down in one view the several parts of our system, as formed by the decisions of our understanding, when in her utmost stretch of contemplation; or as calculated to model our imagination for directing us in the conduct of life. By which it will appear that the seeming contradictions and evil consequences apprehended in it, are only variations of language, and lights of placing things in, necessary for accommodating them to the different capacities of sensitive-rational animals. We have found it expedient in our chapter upon that article, and upon several occasions since, to represent God under two characters, as Creator, and as Governor of the Universe. In the former of those capacities he is incomprehensible, nor can we safely affirm anything concerning his proceedings, the manner of them, or counsels directing them. We know he has interspersed a mixture of evil among his works, and though I have suggested very probable grounds to hope the quantity of it is inconceivably small in proportion to the good, yet that there is some, we feel daily by unwelcome experience: from hence we may presume the nature of things originally so constituted, as that the little sprinking of evil was made necessary to support and secure the greater good.

But God in his capacity of Governor descends nearer to our comprehension: we may imagine him ruling with unwearied infinite goodness, a little restrained by the necessity he had imposed upon himself at the creation, but watchful to employ his power and wisdom for preventing the growth of evil beyond that necessity in any single instance, and impartial to distribute it in exact measure among all his creatures. In this view of his government, it appears his eye never terminates upon evil, but regards it only as a means to work out the greater good he graciously purposes to procure; and this is the only view wherein we can behold him, our optics being not suited to discern him in his work of creation. There may be creatures of more exalted intelligence, endowed with faculties capacious enough to comprehend the original constitution of nature, to discover and contemplate Attributes unknown and unthought of by us. But their doctrine upon these matters would be unintelligible to the acutest of us, who are but as vulgar in comparison with them, and therefore must content ourselves with what they might regard as exoterics. Yet this inferior doctrine, I mean inferior with respect to other natures, is still too high to serve for our common use; so that we must divide it into that we may entertain in the closet, and that we shall find portable to carry about upon common occasions. And we shall begin with the former, as being the standard to regulate, and foundation whereon to construct the other.

7. The value of measures and quality of actions must be denominated from the whole amount of the fruits to be produced by them. The fond mother that indulges her child in every foolish fancy, does him hurt, although she procures him a present pleasure, because it is attended with mischievous consequences: and the prudent parent who sends his son away

from the ease and conveniences of home to the discipline and hardships of a school, does him a kindness, though he drives him into a disagreeable and painful road, because it will lead to his accomplishment, his credit, and his greater enjoyment, when he comes out into the world. And in general, whatever we do to another, however immediately pleasing, yet if we do it with intention to bring on mischief greater than the pleasure we give, it must be counted an act of malice. As on the other hand whatever we do troublesome or painful, yet if done with intention to procure greater benefit to the party, it is an instance of kindness and goodness. These then being the grounds whereon we make an estimation of our own actions, we can employ none other in estimating the divine; for as has been often remarked before, we can form no conception of God unless from archetypes found within ourselves. For this reason he is incomprehensible in his character of Creator, because we have nothing in our proceedings at all similar to the production of a substance, to the assigning primary properties, or constituting the relations between one thing and another. Our employment lies in observing the things about us, their qualities, their relations to our well or ill being, and from thence contriving the methods requisite for attaining our purposes.

Upon this narrow bottom of experience we may raise an idea of our provident and beneficent Governor, whom we may conceive proceeding upon a constitution of things already established, capable of admitting an inexhaustible and boundless stream of happiness, but not without a small mixture of evil made necessary to introduce it. We may apprehend him not, like ourselves, circumscribed within a little sphere of limited knowledge, but omniscient to discern distinctly all the substances existing, the situations they might be placed in, the mutual affections that might ensue upon their application to one another: and completely wise, to understand the effect of every motion and operation among them, of every combination of motions, and operations among them all, and look through every succession of causes to their remotest consequences. We may then figure to ourselves this infinite wisdom employed by infinite goodness to contrive a plan of nature, wherein all the good possible for the creatures should be contained, all methods put in use for enhancing their happiness, not excepting such evils from whence a further greater good might be marked out, and none admitted which will not redound to some signal benefit of the creation.

In this idea of divine Providence we shall find nothing unbecoming a wise and gracious Governor, nor are those provisions made for the evils interspersed among his works, an impeachment of his goodness: for being made with a view to the good whereof they are necessarily productive, they fall properly under the denomination of acts of kindness and beneficence: it will perhaps be said that all this may account for the introduction of natural evil into the system of Providence, but does not reconcile us to the provision of motives drawing into moral evil, upon which the difficulty principally arose. But let us consider that the very existence of moral evil depends upon natural: for we could do no wrong if we could do nothing wherefrom some hurt or damage or displeasure might accrue either to ourselves or any other besides. Therefore natural evil being the ground which gives scope to moral, it will be worth while to bestow some particular consideration upon the former, whereby to gather light for discovering the consistency of the latter with wisdom and goodness.

8. Evils whereof we have any experience or comprehension may be ranged under two classes, Inevitable and Avoidable; and each of these subdivided again into two species, distinguishable by the channels through

which they fall upon us. Inevitable evils are either those we are subjected to by the constitution of our nature, as the infirmities of age, diseases, and complaints occasioned by unwholesome airs or variations of weather, or else those whereto our ignorance of the means proper for preventing them renders us liable, such as sudden deaths, maimings or other bodily hurts by the stroke of lightning, which anybody might easily escape, if he could but always know the particular spot where the lightning will fall. Of avoidable evils, which nevertheless we do not avoid, some are prudential, such as labour, troubles, self-denials undergone voluntarily for the sake of some advantage to be gained thereby: others punitory, which we draw upon ourselves by our ill conduct and wilful mismanagement.

And these several kinds of evils may spring from one another: for a man by his debaucheries may contract diseases he cannot afterwards get rid of; or by intemperance may so weaken his faculties that he shall not discern the dangers he might easily have avoided; or by extravagance reduce himself to such poverty as that it shall become prudent to submit to drudgery and hardships for his sustenance and support. In these cases the necessity rendering evil prudential, the distemper and ignorance subjecting to inevitable evil, may be ranked under the class of punitory, as on the other hand the latter may be styled prudential, when inflicted to secure peace, and good order, and the benefits of society.

9. It is an ancient and prevailing opinion that physical evil was the effect of moral. Many orthodox divines hold that evil first entered into nature upon the rebellion of Lucifer, and was introduced into these sublunary regions by the sin of Man: for that the earth in its paradisiacal state had nothing of pain, disease, uneasiness, or trouble belonging to it. We have found so much in confirmation of this latter notion as to make it highly probable, that if mankind could once totally clear themselves of their attachment to present pleasure, their impotence of resisting desire, their indolence, and their selfishness, they might by their united endeavours quickly relieve themselves from all intolerable evils: and against what remained, they might arm themselves with such a temper of mind, as should change its nature, making it cease to be evil by drawing out its sting, and rendering it incapable of hurting them.

But though by these means they might restore a paradise upon earth, yet it is much to be doubted whether this paradise would extend to the brute creation. One may imagine, and but barely imagine, that the sagacity of man, improved and exerted to the utmost, might inure the lions and wolves to live upon dead carcasses, without worrying their brother animals: but one cannot even imagine how any human skill and industry could ever discipline the fish, or the insects, so that the pike should no longer be the terror of the lake, nor the shark reign as tyrant of the deep, nor the dolphin tire down the flying-fish, nor the spider entangle the heedless fly in his texture, and then destroy him with a lingering and painful death. But it is said the animals were mild, gentle, and innocent at the beginning: sporting the lion ramped, and in his paws dandled the kid; bears, ounces, tigers, pards gambolled before them: until their natures were changed upon the disobedience of man, for whose sake God cursed the ground with all its produce and inhabitants. Which brings the wants, pains, distresses, as well among brutes as men, under the idea of punitory.

There is likewise a heterodox notion tending to the same conclusion, which supposes a pre-existent state, wherein the spirits of men and animals, by the wrong use of the powers and liberty they then enjoyed, have made

themselves obnoxious to the sufferings they now endure. Thus we find that men of different persuasions in other respects have agreed in ascribing physical evil to moral, as its cause and origin. And this, if it were fully established, would give us a more favourable opinion of our existence: for it is some consolation to know, there are no evils in nature absolutely inevitable, and it leaves no room to hope, that we may some time or other attain a competent knowledge and strength of mind sufficient to secure us against every mischief.

Besides it is more easy to comprehend how the sufferings for wrong doing may be productive of the good we have supposed in a former place resulting therefrom, than inevitable mischiefs: because they will naturally spur on those creatures, who have knowledge of the causes they flow from, to use their activity in practising the methods requisite for escaping them: whereas what is absolutely unavoidable can have no influence upon the conduct. Yet it must be acknowledged, that in case either of hurts consequent upon faults committed in a pre-existent state, or of miseries brought upon animals by the wickedness of man, they do not yield a profitable fruit to the creatures suffering; therefore, since we have laid down that every evil is productive of good somewhere or other, the benefit must redound to some other creatures. Which may serve as an argument to prove the connection of interests between the visible world and the invisible

10. But were neither of the before-mentioned hypotheses to be admitted, yet it is notorious that one creature often profits by the hurts and labours of another, and suffers by the faults of another. We find it necessary to slaughter animals for our sustenance, and put them to severe drudgeries in our service. In return we are forced to toil and trouble in the care of creatures useful to us: there are insects which prey upon our flesh, our blood, and our vitals, perhaps in greater multitudes than we are aware of: some diseases, and it has been imagined all of them, proceeding from an imperceptible vermin swarming within us. These instances may corroborate our opinion of the general connection, and afford a strong presumption that the mischiefs which do not contribute to the benefit of any creatures we see, contribute to that of others we do not see: and what we have observed before concerning the divine equity, insures to every individual his proportionable share of the good and evil he brings upon others.

Such considerations duly attended to, might silence the clamours of those free-thinkers who urge the absurdity of our being punished for crimes whereof we are not conscious, or of the innocent suffering for the wickedness of the guilty. Because, say they, such severities can do us no good, as neither directing us what to do, or what to avoid, nor encouraging us to pursue one course of behaviour, rather than another. But though it should do us no good, how can they know it may not prove an example and direction to other Beings, or to ourselves in some other form of Being, when we may have faculties to cast a retrospect, not only upon our sufferings, but likewise upon the prior conduct, that brought us obnoxious to them? Correction of the offender and restraint of vice among mankind is one end of punishment, but not the sole nor the principal: for we stand as a spectacle to other creatures, whose numbers are greater, and interest more important than our own. For they having a full discernment of the general interest and the divine equity, will see that evil cannot befal anywhere without a diminution of happiness in the universe, and consequently in the share of every member composing it: therefore will look upon our sufferings as a damage to themselves, which will give them the proper effect of punishment, cre-

ating an aversion against the practices occasioning them, as being detrimental to all in general.

11. Having found reasons for ascribing the origin of all pain and suffering to the misconduct either of the party enduring them, or of others to whom he stands in some respect related, it remains next to inquire into the rise of moral evil. Whenever we do wrong we are prompted thereto by the impulse of some desire, appearing more satisfactory to our apprehension than the dictates of judgment or conscience. For it has been shown in the course of this work, that the mind acts constantly upon motives; such as they are, such precisely her action is: nor is this inconsistent with freewill, which depends upon the absence of all impediment against the operations of the mind taking effect upon her own volitions, but not at all upon the causes influencing her to operate. But all motives are perceptions wherein the mind is purely passive, being acted upon by the mechanical motions of our organization striking the perceptions upon her: and this alike as well in our deliberate or voluntary, as in our inadvertent or spontaneous thoughts. For whether I play upon an organ myself, or have one that will play by clockwork, still it is the mechanical motions of the keys, the air passing through the pipes, and undulations coming from thence, that impress perceptions of the sound upon the mind: and if the organ be out of order, I cannot procure perfect music either way: whence it appears that the behaviour of man depends upon the condition of his mental organization.

Now to account for the disorder of our machine let us take the orthodox scheme, and suppose that as a man by his debaucheries may entail diseases upon his children, which shall continue from generation to generation, so the sin of our first parents worked such a distemperature into their interior frame, as spoiled the constitution of their posterity ever since. We must look then for the origin of our own depravity in the first fatal step of our primogenitors; and we shall find that to have proceeded from their ignorant simplicity, and the temptation thrown in their way; causes antecedent to the act of transgressing.

God had prohibited their eating the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden upon pain of death, and it does not appear they would have ever entertained a thought of transgressing of themselves, but if the fruit at any time had chanced to catch their eyes, they would instantly have taken them off to some other object. But the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. It is not necessary to suppose the woman immediately believed the serpent, or was willing to take his word rather than God's: but what she heard perplexed her: for being wholly unexperienced in falsehood, she had no notion of any such thing. Suspicion could not enter her thoughts, as having never had a cause in anything happening before to alarm it, she had always been used to look upon everything as true that was told her, and now to be told that the fruit was of excellent quality, and that God himself knew it to be so, when he had before declared it mortal, must throw her into an utter astonishment. In these circumstances it was natural for her to consider attentively that fruit which was the subject of her astonishment, if perchance something might be discovered therein to disentangle the perplexity: we all do so upon the like occasion, nor can one find anything blameable in the procedure.

Thus far then here was no guilt nor disobedience, no wrong turn of the will: but being thus innocently drawn to fix an earnest attention upon the

tree, she saw that it was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. That is, her looks dwelling upon the tree, and her thoughts upon the suggestions of the serpent, introduced stronger ideas of the deliciousness of the fruit and desirableness of wisdom, than she had ever known before, she had already eaten other fruits, and had found their sweetness and their wholesomeness correspond with the fairness of their appearance: from whence she had gotten an appetite giving a preference to whatever looked ripe and blooming. She had seen Adam give names to all the animals expressive of their natures, and no doubt had known many other instances of his knowledge being superior to her's. They had both had perpetual occasion to contemplate the wisdom and omniscience of God manifested in the admirable structure and contrivance of his works. But this admiration of wisdom was no more than a cool judgment of its excellency, and the advantage of possessing higher degrees of knowledge rather than lower, without creating a desire of raising their faculties above the present pitch, which they had no prospect of effecting: and their appetite being abundantly satisfied with the foods allowed them, could never grow to a vehement craving.

But now the woman, beguiled by the artifice of the serpent, beheld the delicious fruit and the present means suggested of attaining a godlike wisdom, with desire, yet being withholden from eating by the prohibition, desire, as it will naturally do while entertained in the thoughts without being gratified, grew more and more importunate. Still we do not find anything to blame in her; she had indeed committed a fatal error, but we cannot call it a misbehaviour, for she was not apprized of her danger, nor knew the consequence of suffering the sensitive part to gather head above the rational. Her close attention to the fruit, and its pretended virtues, was not an idle curiosity, nor a criminal indulgence, but an honest attempt to get information upon the doubts that perplexed her.

12. But desire being grown exorbitant, her reflection on the command to abstain became uneasy to her; which uneasiness got hold on the will, influencing her to use endeavours for stifling the reflection, and turning her notice upon the allurements in her fancy; by this means bringing herself to believe, because she wished it were true, that what the serpent had said was right, and that God was not in earnest when he made the denunciation. In this manner I conceive sin entered into the world, beginning in a wilful infidelity, which is always accompanied with a like wilful partiality to some fond passion or appetite; and this was the first wrong election the woman made; or, in the language of some people, the first abuse of her power o indifferency, whereby she annexed the idea of best to an act of disobedience, and then the judgment being perverted, no wonder it led her to practise that, which now appeared the best; so she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat. And when she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat, we may presume he was prevailed on by the like process as she had been.

Thus we see the freewill of our ancestors warped to a wrong bias in the same manner as our's is, namely, by desire catching away the idea of satisfaction from judgment and conscience; for when the urgency of desire becomes so pressing as to create an intolerable uneasiness, it makes present gratification appear preferable to remote good or rectitude, and gains the consent of the Will to an action known and discerned to be wrong. But the steps by which desire rose to this urgency proceeded from antecedent and external causes: to wit, the original formation of the woman, when

the rib was fashioned into a machinery wherein the sensitive organs were made capable of striking colours, too strong for the rational to counterbalance; her artless simplicity, unapprized of the danger, and unacquainted with the quality of external allurements to raise a violence in the organs by their repeated action, and the malice of the serpent to take a base advantage of her weakness and innocence.

If we go on further to trace the rise of this malice in the serpent, or the wicked spirit possessing it, we must ascribe it to the perverseness worked into his nature by his fall from an angel of light. It would be too bold to pronounce anything confidently concerning angels, or their manner of Action, but if we will reason at all about them, we must employ our own ideas; and it is scarce possible to conceive that an angel enjoying the beatific vision, exempt from passion or frailty, and having a perfect understanding, should ever think of rebelling against Omnipotence: therefore when he entertained this thought, he must have been in a state of ignorance and error, an overweening conceit of his own excellence and power; and have fallen from his angelic intelligence before he fell from his allegiance. Nor is it conceivable that he should have thrown away any part of his intelligence voluntarily, but was reduced to error and darkness by some provision of causes working an effect necessary with respect to him; agreeably to that ancient saying, Whom Jove would destroy, he first infatuates.

Upon our hypothesis of the Mundane soul, each component spirit in its state of absorption having communication of perceptions with the rest, must know the qualities of matter, and effect of a vital union therewith to introduce moral and physical evil: therefore cannot be imagined to immerse itself therein of choice or through ignorance. But when a discerption happens, it must be brought about by the dust of the ground or some corporeal particles being moulded into organization, and the spirit being breathed thereinto, as the breath of life, whereby the whole composition, bodily, and spiritual, will become a living soul or animal. Now whether we suppose this discerption effected by divine agency, or certain laws of nature established for that purpose, or that the Mundane Soul, discerning the necessity of immersed spirits to support its own happiness, withdraws its communication from those to whose turn it comes in rotation to undergo the burden of this public service; or that the spirits themselves, sensible of that necessity and the equitableness of sharing their proportion in the evil as well as the good, undertake the task when falling to their lot, without reluctance: still we shall find an innocent ignorance and imbecility, and the mechanical operations of a material organization to be the cause preceding the first taint of moral evil in them.

Or whatever other pre-existent scheme you adopt, yet you must always allow the creatures to have been good and upright before their first wilful misbehaviour, whereby they worked a debasement in their nature: for else you will ascribe their defect of goodness directly to the author of their nature. But during their state of goodness and uprightness, it would be quite out of character to suppose them doing anything coolly, deliberately, and knowingly, to put themselves out of this state: therefore they must either have been drawn unwittingly into an immersion in matter, by steps the consequences of which they were not aware of, or there must have been some pressing desire or uneasiness raised in them without their own agency, rendering present gratification and ease more satisfactory, than the practice of what they know to be right.

But if you reject all the foregoing hypotheses, and insist upon children being born in the original innocence of the grandmother Eve, we shall still find evil introduced among them by the same process. We came into the world little different from Brutes, without idea of right and wrong, having sense and appetite for the guides of our conduct, and justified in following them because destitute of any other. Reason is not reckoned to open until seven years old: but without ascertaining the precise time, it is certainly much younger than desire, which having gotten the start in growth becomes too vigorous for it to control. So that when reason begins to operate, it can only discover what is right without raising an appetite sufficient to make us pursue it: unless by good management of parents, or good fortune, some passion or desire can be brought to assist in overpowering the rest. And if any one denies that it is some desire, whose rising in the mind was not our own act, which prompts us in every failure of our duty, let him produce an instance wherein any man refuses to do what in his clear judgment he discerns to be right, when he apprehends nothing disagreeable in the performance, and no inclination or habit leads a contrary way: or ever shuts his eyes against reason, without a previous suspicion that it would direct him to something he does not like.

13. Thus in all the avenues through which we can imagine sin to enter among the creatures, we find it introduced by a provision of causes made previously to its entrance: and the whole progress tracing it backwards, seems to have been as follows. Things were so constituted at the creation as that a certain quantity of suffering was made necessary to the enjoyments of the perceptive Beings created. Our gracious Governor, on forming his universal plan of Providence, interspersed the requisite mixture of suffering therein, for the sake of that unspeakable happiness that should be worked out thereby: yet he would not inflict it with his own hand, but chose rather so to order his courses of nature and fortune, as that it should ensue in consequence of wilful misbehaviour among the creatures. Yet neither would he impel them to misbehave, but placed them in such circumstances of ignorance and imbecility as should influence them by the urgency of motives to choose freely what they knew to be wrong. Nor perhaps were this ignorance and imbecility brought on by a chain of necessary causes, but he may have given his perfect spirits such discernment as to see the expedience of driving one another thereinto; or undertaking it voluntarily out of an equitable disposition, not covetous of engrossing the whole of happiness to themselves, in which case we shall find the causes of moral evil derive their origin from prudence and duty, and the most exalted public spirit.

I have promised to build nothing upon hypothesis, therefore shall not pursue this last supposition to any consequences that might be drawn from it as from a certain fact: nevertheless, I may employ it as an imaginary case to show how the steps conducting to moral evil might be taken without imputation of unholiness. For if the spirits while in the perfect state, involve one another or themselves, in a dangerous ignorance and imbecility whenever equity requires, in contemplation of the mischiefs to be incurred thereby being necessary to the good of the community, we cannot rank this view under the denomination of malice, or envy, or sensuality, or any other kind of unholiness, In like manner, should we suppose the imperfection brought on by a chain of necessary causes, deriving from the first disposition of Providence, made with the same view, neither shall we thereby charge the Disposer of events with unholiness.

For let us take the points in the line of this view severally in order: the

creatures in their original constitution, were made capable of an immense enjoyment; but this enjoyment was not worked into their natures as a primary property, it was to be the effect of an application of some means employed to excite it in them. This happiness then we must regard as the ultimate point whereon the view of Providence terminates, and proceeds next to the means whereby it might be effected; but a certain proportion of suffering being among the requisite means, if the plan had been so ordered as that the exact measure should have been brought on by necessary causes, or even by immediate exertions of Omnipotence, these would have been acts of kindness by the rule laid down in § 7. Where then is the difference upon suffering being made punitory instead of inevitable? The weight of it is the same from whatever causes arising, or through whatever channels deriving; and it is this weight that makes wrong doing to be what it is, for nothing is wrong that has not a tendency to some damage. Thus moral evil, as we have observed in a former place, were no evil if there were no natural, and is no greater than the mischiefs whereof it may be productive. Where then the mischiefs produced are acts of kindness, and constantly consistent with perfect goodness, the introduction of moral evil necessary to produce them will fall under the same denomination, and consequently be consistent with perfect holiness. But what is apt to scandalize us upon this topic is, that holiness in ourselves being a moral sense and habit, we cannot do a wrong thing knowingly, even for the sake of some signal profit to accrue therefrom, without making a breach into the authority of our moral sense and strength of our habit, thereby losing our holiness, and setting an example, that may endanger the mischief to spread further than we intended. From hence we conceive the like of God; and because it is our duty to be holy as he is holy, we suppose holiness the same thing in him, as it is in us: whereas we should consider that his holiness is not an effect of moral senses or habits, preventing the growth of a depravity which can never take root in him; but a branch of his wisdom and goodness, discerning and inclining him to the things most beneficial for his creatures. Therefore whenever these Attributes point to moral evil, as ultimately productive of their benefit, he can make provision for it without departing from his holiness, or endangering consequences he does not design: for he sees all the recesses of the heart, knows all the springs of action, and has the forming and marshalling of all causes at his disposal: therefore can say to iniquity as he does to the sea, Hitherto shall thy proud waves come, but no further; so may break down the bounds anywhere to let in an inundation, without hazard of its spreading ever so little further than requisite to answer his gracious purposes.

14. It has been often remarked, upon observation of the course of events in this world, that crosses, afflictions, and misfortunes, turn out to the advantage of the persons falling under them, or of others; and that good frequently springs on from evil of both kinds. Treatises have been written to show that private vices are public benefits; and though they have justly given offence, by the subject being handled in such a manner as to make it appear an encouragement to vice, yet the fact cannot well be denied by an impartial observer. But when we come to examine how vice produces any benefit, we shall always find it to be by checking or counterbalancing the effect of some other more pernicious vice: so it must make work for itself, and can never do good until it has done the mischief, which by a contrary species of depravity it may afterwards rectify. Thus if there were no co-

vetousness there would need no extravagance; if there were no carelessness there would be no want of theft, and cheating, to keep men vigilant; if they had not pride and vanity, there would be no use of censoriousness, and calumny, which serve to mortify them; if the world was without bigotry, it would have no occasion for free-thinking; if there was not canting and terrifying in Religion, no good could come of profane swearing or scoffing. And the like may be said of losses and misfortunes, whose benefit is only to awaken our indolence and thoughtlessness, to curb some presumption, or rub off the rust that had gathered upon us by long ease and prosperity.

Thus how much soever particular vices may prove advantageous as mankind stands circumstanced, yet vice in general is wholly pernicious: and if they could once get entirely clear of it, they would never want its help, nor any of those troubles, pains, diseases, and sinister accidents, whose service lies in correcting it. Therefore so far as our judgment may decide in the matter, we may conclude that moral and physical evil upon the whole contribute nothing to the benefit of mankind, but our condition would be much better, were both of them totally banished from among us. Nor can we doubt the power and wisdom of God to have excluded them: a terrestrial state exempt from them both, is not repugnant to our ideas, as appears from the many descriptions given of a paradise, or golden age.

But the infinite goodness of our Almighty Governor, void of neither love nor mercy to any of his works, is now universally received as an article both of orthodox and philosophical faith: we have endeavoured to confirm it in the course of this work by arguments drawn from experience and observation, and to show that it would be blaspheming his holy name to suppose his views ever terminating upon evil. Since then evil is admitted into that part of his system of Providence respecting ourselves, and yet does not terminate in our benefit, it seems necessarily to follow, that there is a connexion of interests between the visible world and the invisible, between the human species and higher orders of Beings: so that all the troubles of this life and miseries of the next, incurred by wickedness committed here, redound to the far greater benefit of other creatures, for else they would have been prevented, or remedied. How this benefit accrues therefrom, it may not be possible for us to explain, but that some signal benefit does accrue, we may be convinced by the foregoing considerations.

And from what has been argued in former Chapters concerning the divine Equity, it follows, that whatever tends to the advantage of the universe, tends some time or other, to the advantage of every individual contained therein, and consequently of the sufferer himself. Thus if all suffering be an evil of the punitory kind with respect to the creatures, it is all of the prudential with respect to their Governor: and a measure of prudence can never be deemed repugnant to holiness. So that when we speak of the formation of the plan of Providence, we may conclude in the same style as Moses did of the creation. The Lord comprised therein all those treasures of happiness whereof his perceptive creatures were capable: and he interspersed so much pain and suffering, but not a jot more, as was necessary to work out that happiness: and he admitted such streams of moral evil as should bring on that pain and suffering, confining them within certain stated bounds, that they should not in anywise overflow further than he purposed: and he made provision of causes for ignorance and imbecility, just sufficient to open the sluices of those streams. And the Lord looked upon the whole form of the plan that he had contrived, and upon every line, and spot, and point thereof, and behold it was very good. And he gave

motions to his material, and ideas to his spiritual substances, to carry on the exact succession of events he had ordained. And the Lord rested from his work, until the appointed times should arrive, according to the vacant spaces left purposely in his plan, wherein he had before determined to interpose with his own hand for manifestation of his power and of his dominion to his intelligent creatures.

15. By placing things in this light, I think we may reconcile the system of Providence to our ideas of goodness and holiness: the whole difficulty being now thrown off upon the original constitution of substances, whereby good was made necessarily dependent upon a mixture of evil. And this it is no wonder we do not understand, being a work of creation, whereof we have not faculties to discern anything distinctly. For creation, and the first establishment of the nature of things with their mutual relations, is a pure act, having nothing prior whereon to ground the measures of it. But we have no conception of a pure act proceeding without intelligence, I mean, intelligence such in kind as our own, that is, a discernment of objects, relations, and truths, already existing; whereas unless we will give into the absurdity of two First Causes, we cannot admit any objects, or relations, or truths subsisting independently on the Creator, or prior to his establishment of them. Therefore we must take the primary properties of substances, and nature of things as we find them, without spending ourselves in fruitless inquiries after their origin: and may rest abundantly satisfied with the disposition thereof by our allwise Governor, whom we may acknowledge, upon the foregoing representation made of his provisions, ordering all things for the best, to be infinitely gracious, beneficent, and holy.

If any very righteous persons shall take offence at our ranking the Causes influencing to moral evil among the provisions of heaven, let him remember that the like is done more directly in the Sacred Writings, where mention is made of hardening Pharaoh's heart, and of tempting men upon other occasions. Add to this, that we are instructed in our daily prayers to petition that God would not lead us into temptation, which implies that he sometimes does: for it would be an absurdity and mockery to pray, that the moon and stars might not fall upon our heads, that the ground we stand on might not lose its solidity so as to let us drop through to the centre, or for averting any other mischief whereof there is not some hazard that it might befall. But are we not forbidden to say, when temptations assail us, that we are tempted of God, or to think otherwise than that we are drawn aside by our own lusts? And is it not repugnant to reason and natural Religion to imagine him the author of sin, or approver of all the follies and wickedness abounding among mankind? Must not such a notion prove subversive of all morality, and introductive of a general licentiousness, misrule, and confusion?

This I never meant to deny, and therefore would not have such thoughts entertained in our imagination. But we have shown by several instances in the preceding Chapters, that imagination is too gross or too scanty to take in the whole circle of objects discernible by understanding: that it would be mischievous or highly inconvenient, if not impracticable, to conceive of some things in all particulars wherein we may know them to be true: and that there is one set of ideas proper for contemplations of the closet, but another very different, better suited to direct us in our ordinary conduct. I shall now attempt an examination of the exoteric doctrines upon this article, which we may conveniently carry about for our own common use,

and may communicate safely to all comers, without so much hazard of mi- leading, or being misapprehended, as we might have been liable to, in the others.

16. An universal Providence, extending to all minutest events happening throughout the world, is by much too large an idea for us to contain: we are quickly bewildered in that infinite variety of complicated causes concurring to almost every production, and lost in the length of operations succeeding one another from the beginning of every chain, therefore content ourselves with contemplating one, or a few near causes most material for us to take notice of. The fall of Troy is commonly ascribed to the inveiglements of Paris and elopement of Helen: but the constitution of the Grecian and Trojan states, their alliances, their military discipline, natural strength and prowess, the political artifices employed to bring them together, and innumerable other causes, were concurring to complete the catastrophe. Nor are we shorter in computing the multitude, than tracing the length of our causes.

Horace blames the poet who should begin the Trojan war from Leda's egg, yet it must be owned the mother's education or example, the effects of whatever amour was figured by the celestial swan, and former precedents of stealing away ladies from foreign countries, might be the prior causes of Helen's elopement. And the condition and discipline of the powers engaged, depended upon the birth and breeding given to the combatants by their parents upon the acts of former heroes and legislators, upon the manner of their first settlements in colonies, and other higher sources, which it would be neither needful nor practicable for us to investigate.

Nor are we less confined in our prospect of effects than of causes: we reckon the consequences of Helen's infidelity to terminate in the destruction of Ilium, the ruin and dispersion of its inhabitants; but what further effects this dispersion had upon other countries, we do not take into account nor can fully estimate. If it be true that Eneas laid the first foundations of the Roman empire from whose ashes our modern kingdoms are sprung, it will appear highly probable that our own condition at this day would have been very different from what it is, whether better or worse we cannot tell, if Helen had been more discreet. Thus the circle of our vision stands circumscribed on all sides; our discernment into the courses of events has but scanty bounds both in length and breadth; we can neither count the threads whereof they are contexted, nor trace them to the beginning, or to the end.

So that our views of nature are like the map of an inland country, where you see rivers without any sources, continually discharging their waters without a sea to receive them; roads that you know not from whence they come, nor whither they conduct; mountains, forests, and plains cut off in the middle by the marginal lines of your paper. In like manner we are forced to divide the plan of Providence into many little plans proportionable to the scale of our imagination or extent of our discernment, each whereof we contemplate singly at a time; taking whatever lies at the top of them for original causes, and all we find at the bottom for ultimate ends. For we consider properties in compound bodies, motions in the elements, in vegetable and animal organizations, without thinking of the sources from which they derived; we find designs and desires rise in our minds, without knowing from whence they came: and we regard the effect these things may have upon our well or ill being, or relative to our uses, without diving into further conseouences, wherein we have no apparent concern.

By this means our system becomes replete with multitudes of agents and powers, appearing to us as original sources of events, and which may be ranged under three general classes, Nature, Chance, and Freewill. We acknowledge indeed that all these powers lie under the continual inspection and control of our supreme Governor, who turns them by the secret workings of his Providence, operating in a manner unaccountable by us, to answer such purposes as in his wisdom he judges proper. Now when we come to inquire what these purposes must be, we can think them none other than such as are good, and gracious, and beneficent: for it is repugnant to our ideas to imagine any malice, or envy, or iniquity, or sensuality, or other unholiness in the character of God, or that his views ever terminate upon evil: and herein we coincide with the esoteric scheme. But by reason of the scantiness of our plan, we commonly apprehend his views to terminate where our own do, therefore ascribe whatever we can discern to be good, either in the possession or the consequences, to his providence; and for all else we do not want sources to assign it: for there are the imperfections of nature, the rovings of chance, the follies and misbehaviour of mankind, to account for physical evil; and the perverseness of freewill, to account for moral.

17. Nevertheless, all nature and all the powers of nature being subject to the divine power, it is manifest that the evils worked by them could not have befallen against the divine Will, because nothing has happened which that Will might not have prevented, therefore we say they were permitted. And this is enough to give them progress, for there being Agents and causes everywhere ready at hand to produce evil, there needs no more than permission to let them take their course, without making provision for setting them at work. So the office of Providence remains only to work out the good, and restrain its contrary within due boundaries. If it be said that permitting is the same thing as causing or doing; for he that sees a villain go to assassinate a person whom he could easily save but will not, can never escape the imputation of murder: whoever urges this objection, must be very little acquainted with the nature of the human mind, whose uses we are now solely to consult. For though in our speculative moods we can scarce find a difference between permission and action, yet they appear in very different colours to the imagination.

A humane benevolent man might scruple to cut off a leg, to hang up a malefactor, to kill an ox or sheep himself, yet may suffer and even employ the surgeon, the executioner, and the butcher to do it: and when we read of Morocco emperors putting criminals to death with their own hand, we always look upon it as a mark of a cruel, savage, and vindictive temper. It is a common saying that you must set a rogue to catch a rogue; but an honest man would disdain stooping to those base and treacherous artifices employed by the rogue he sets to betray his accomplice. A minister having as much conscientiousness as ambition, might scruple in his own person to tempt the honest but weak and needy servant of a foreign prince to betray his master's secrets: yet make no difficulty to send his emissaries, for that purpose, when he finds it necessary for the interests and preservation of his own country. Were he to do the former, we should have a mean and odious opinion of him: were he to boggle at the latter, not only his ill wishers and the grumblers, but the more candid and considerate, would condemn him as over scrupulous, narrow minded, and insufficient for his office.

Since then we find so striking a difference with respect to the moral cha

racter between doing and permitting, as that we may innocently suffer a thing to be done which would fix a blemish upon us to do, it is commendable to preserve the same distinction in our conceptions of Providence. For as we have observed before, the ingredients in our idea, more especially our exoteric idea of God, are all taken from archetypes found within ourselves: for we cannot see him as he is, nor penetrate into the essence of his nature, therefore ought to model our apprehensions according to our best notions of perfection and holiness. And I believe any common man, perhaps any man whatever, in his ordinary trains of thinking, when he has not leisure to extend, to compare, and examine his reflections on all sides, would be more shocked at the thought of provision being purposely made for the sins of men, than at their being permitted.

18. Not that the general apprehensions of mankind were always of this cast, for the Gentiles often heard of the deceits, the adulteries, the revenges, the murders, practised by their Gods, without thinking the worse of them; and the Jews were bred up in such strong persuasions of a Theocracy, directing every good or evil that befell their nation, stirring up enemies against them, sometimes tempting men and hardening their hearts, that they were brought by education and custom to look upon these things as not incompatible with holiness. And whoever will carefully examine the general tenor of the Scriptures, will find them approach nearer upon this article to our esoteric than to the modern vulgar doctrine. Therefore it was no improper instruction for them to pray, Lead us not into temptation. This our expositors in general now interpret, Ward off those temptations that would be thrown upon us by other Agents.

Nor are there instances wanting elsewhere of their annexing other ideas to the text than did originally and naturally belong to it: so that it seems easier for them to justify, than deny the fact. For they may rest their justification upon the fundamental principle even of their adversaries, to wit, upon the nature of things: for what things are of nearer concern to us, than our own apprehensions, the make and cast of our imagination? or what nature more incumbent upon us to study, than our own? But custom being a second nature, the variations worked thereby must be regarded in forming a practical doctrine. It is the business of a physician to study nature, nor does he depart from his rule when he varies his methods according to the temperature and constitution of his patients; when he recommends exercise in a palsy or a lethargy, but rest and composure in a fever; when he prescribes copious phlebotomy to the Frenchman, but more sparingly to the Spaniard or the English. In like manner a physician of souls follows nature by instilling sentiments adapted to times and circumstances, and explaining those which were salutary only to the ancient Jew or Gentile, in such manner as may bring them suitable to modern digestion.

For my part, I must confess I could never prefer that petition in the strict literal sense with any devotion, therefore am forced to take the comment for my private use. Nor is it in matters of Religion alone that I find it impracticable to make apprehension keep pace with knowledge: for in my common scenes of business or diversion, I cannot conceive the steadfast ground I stand upon, to rush forward incessantly nine hundred miles in a minute; nor the wainscot shelves supporting my heavy folios, to contain above forty times more of empty pore than solid substance; nor the yielding air to press upon my flesh with many tons' weight without my feeling it; nor the compactest bodies I see or handle, to be made of little particles smaller than the finest dust raised by a chariot wheel, holden

together without any strings or cement between, by external pressure of ether: all which are certain truths demonstrated to us in the schools. Thus the modern exposition stands founded upon reason and the nature of things, nor can it justly be charged as a prevarication and departure from authority; for we are told that our instructor preached to the poor, that is, the vulgar of his own times: therefore it is no profane or improbable presumption to suppose, that had he been to come in our days and preach to the poor now living, he would have altered his form from Lead, into Protect us against temptations, or perhaps Permit them not to fall upon us.

19. But our ideas of goodness and holiness will not allow us to think anything permitted through oversight, nor unless with a view of some gracious purpose beyond: for it is no uncommon thing for Providence to bring forth good out of evil, and when we can discern this, it gives us a fuller display of the divine wisdom and fatherly care than we should otherwise have had. As for troubles and misfortunes, we often find reason to be thankful for their having fallen upon us: a painful disease or dangerous accident has brought many a heedless creature to seriousness and consideration: and the foundations of prudence are generally laid in disappointment, for it is this that puts us upon exerting our sagacity and industry in taking better measures for the future. Even our pleasures spring in great measure frem evil, for they consist chiefly in action and employment, and most of the business of life lies in providing for the wants and necessities of nature, or securing ourselves against inconveniences that have proved irksome to us: so that if there were no danger of mischief that might hurt or incommode us, our time would pass insipid for want of something to do.

The pleasures of indolence and indulgence of our humours, however delightful at first, are not of a nature to last long: therefore those who place their dependence upon them quickly find them end in disgust and loathing, if they have not something from time to time to ruffle the calm, and give a quickness to their languid desires; a novelty to objects they had been satiated with. And for such as have long schemes of distant advantage in pursuit, they could not furnish out the full career, if it were not for the rubs and difficulties intervening in the way. Nor do labour and uneasiness want efficacy to create pleasure, by making the very deliverance from them an enjoyment: sickness renders health more delightful; crosses and squabbles give a double relish to peace and quiet, and he that should never know a trouble could scarce be said to know the value of ease. For we judge of things by comparison, and never feel the happiness of our condition so sensibly as when reflecting upon a worse, especially one that we have experienced ourselves.

The mischiefs we run ourselves into by folly and ignorance give birth to our philosophy: for who would take pains to hunt after deeper knowledge, if the superficial notices of common sense were sufficient to secure him against every danger he apprehended? Our common topics of thanksgiving are either the deliverance from trouble we have laboured under ourselves, or misfortunes we have seen fall upon others: our sublimest virtues of benevolence and piety spring from our vexations and dislikes: while in youth, health, and plenty, men can find the sources of gratification within their own fund, so are apt to think of themselves alone and their own pleasures without regard to other people, or to the giver of all their blessings; but when distresses fall upon them from which they cannot extricate themselves, they can then see the need of assistance and under-

stand the experience of mutual good will and good offices, and when all human help fails, they then begin to think of seeking it elsewhere. It is a common observation, that uninterrupted prosperity makes men forgetful of God and their future state; the troubles, the dangers, and shortness of continuance in this world are what puts them upon looking towards another: for he that is secure and satisfied in his present condition has little inducement to endeavour attaining a better; nor perhaps are there any who wish to be in heaven until they can stay no longer here, or until reduced to a situation wherein they can find no pleasure in life.

20. Neither is moral evil incapable of being made to yield excellent fruits: the foulness and fatal consequences of one man's wickedness may serve as a warning to thousands to beware of the steps leading into the like, and his indulgence of a vicious appetite sometimes proves the means of eradicating it. For while there are restrictions keeping vice within bounds, it cannot do its worst: but when permitted to take its full swing, it hurries into mischiefs that make its pernicious quality palpably manifest, and work a reformation. So that it may be said of some, they would not be so good as they are, if they had been restrained from being so bad as they were.

Besides that vices curb and correct one another; for being extremes, their contrary attractions serve as a balance to keep them from deviating too far out of the middle way. The covetous and extravagant would be more so but for each other's company: pride and vanity rouse up laziness, and are themselves restrained by the trouble there is in supporting them. Ambition supplies the place of public spirit; emulation that of honour; resentment or insensibility stand in the room of courage; and a servile compliance with fashions performs the office of decency and good nature. How many industrious poor find employment in satisfying the needless wants of the rich? How much of the public revenues arise from the follies and luxuries of mankind? And how much of the public services is performed by an immoderate thirst of gain or applause, or by an averseness to labour and an irregularity of conduct, driving men into perilous professions?

All which things demonstrate the wisdom of Providence, that can produce order out of confusion, the fruits of a most consummate prudence out of self-interest, thoughtlessness, and inordinate passions. For when we reflect how many thousands there are who would cut any man's throat for half-a-crown, how many of the scum of our people have been employed in protecting us against foreign enemies, how much power is sometimes vested in the hands of persons who care for nothing but themselves; it seems a miracle that there should be any such thing as law, or government, or property in the world; much more that we should live in that peace, and plenty, and security, which we enjoy.

Nor are instances wanting both in sacred and profane history, of signal benefits made to grow out of an evil root; the hardness of Pharaoh gave room for the divine power and glory to display themselves: the malice of the Jews and treachery of Judas were instrumental to the redemption: the tyranny and greediness of an English monarch, together with the scandalous lives of the priesthood, brought about our deliverance from the greater tyranny and corruption of Popery: the unreasonable lengths of Cromwell's party instructed our forefathers at the revolution how to frame the constitution upon a solid and equitable footing: the extravagances of methodism and licentiousness of free-thinking help to purify Religion from the dross

of opposite kinds, by putting our learned men upon studying the use o human understanding without abusing it, and guard against the two spe cious but dangerous errors of being righteous overmuch, and wise overmuch; or perhaps preventing themselves from advancing hastily things that would not stand the scrutiny, or laying greater stress upon orthodoxy and externals than upon a rational and useful tenor of conduct.

Neither can we well imagine virtue itself to subsist without some deviations from it; for if we were never permitted to do wrong, we could not choose but to do right; and where there is no choice, there is no merit, or commendation, or reward. Were temptations never to assault us, we need take no thought of our conduct; and were they not sometimes to overcome us, we should have no incitement to diligence and watchfulness, nor to fortify ourselves with those good purposes and habits that conduct to our happiness: for it is the frequent struggling with an adversary and being sometimes foiled by him, that whets our sagacity, exercises our strength, and adds sturdiness to our resolution.

21. Therefore since offences must needs come, because they give being and vigour to virtue, because they terminate in mischiefs that serve as a necessary example and warning to keep the world in order, because they are made instrumental to gracious purposes which would have been frustrated without them: we cannot find anything to disturb us in the thought of their being permitted. Nay, if we consider the matter fairly, we must acknowledge the permission of them an act of mercy and kindness: for if the evils they produce be necessary, they must have fallen heavier by being brought on any other way. Had diseases consequent upon debauchery and lewdness been made inevitable, they would have given us a more unfavourable idea of Providence, than being placed in every man's power by care and sobriety to avoid them: or had they been enjoined as a command, how hardly should we have thought of our Governor as of a most severe and cruel taskmaster.

But permission being given for vicious inclinations to captivate the will and darken the understanding, the drunkard quaffs his liquor in jollity and merriment, without thought of the indigestions, the gout, the joint-racking rheums that will ensue; and when the physician has set him up in tolerable order again, he sings Hang sorrow, cast away care, and returns to his old way with full enjoyment; for he has no foreboding of the consequences, nor sees the destruction lurking at the bottom of the bowl. So the battered rake, if nature or medicine can restore him to a little ability, squanders it all away again without reluctance, until he has exhausted all his health and fixed incurable rottenness in all his bones. It is true they both pay dearly for their pleasures; but then they enjoy them while they can, without being embittered with any dread or anxiety at what may happen afterwards; and when their excruciating pains come upon them, they feel no more than the present smart, without doubling it by the regret of having done that which brought it upon them. Whereas if the miseries they endure be necessary for some services to mankind in general, they must fall somewhere; but were they assigned to the sober provident man, looking always forward upon the present moment, who should be obliged to take the measures knowingly for bringing them upon himself, how much sorer would they press upon him without any mixture even of a transient pleasure? With what reluctance would he swallow the poisonous draught? How grievously would he nauseate the repetition of what he had suffered by severely? with what horror would he enter upon other debaucheries

that lead to certain wretchedness and torments? And when the fatal consequences came on, how would he be apt to double their pressure by fretting and repining at so hard a service being imposed upon him? Have we not then reason to be thankful that those are permitted to make themselves examples of suffering whose vicious inclinations prompt them to undertake it willingly, rather than have it forced upon ourselves, to whom it would prove a dismal scene in the prospect, an intolerable burden in the endurance.

22. Thus we may sometimes see how good springs out of evil, and though we cannot see it in most cases, yet we may safely conclude from the character of our heavenly Father, that not a single misfortune or misbehaviour is permitted which does not produce some greater good although to us unknown. But our ignorance of the benefit need not invalidate our conclusion, for we may be sensible the chart of our imagination is defective and scanty; and as a man tracing a river in his map does not suppose it to have neither source nor discharge, because he sees none within the tract exhibited; so we, when contemplating the courses of events, may conceive there are higher causes and lower ends than those lying within our prospect. Nevertheless, we can hardly extend our thoughts further than the interests of mankind, therefore suppose the evils abounding upon earth tend by some secret way or other to the good order and happiness of this world, or to exercise and prepare men for a better.

As for the sufferings of the next life, we know the dread of them is necessary to restrain enormities that could not be discovered nor punished here: yet upon the doctrine of the straight gate, the benefit redounding to the few righteous passing through it can scarce be imagined a good at all adequate to compensate for the extremities of torment, whereinto multitudes are hurried by the broad way; neither need we suppose them inflicted in detestation and resentment. For though the wicked have lived in enmity against God, yet he who has shown us, as well by the Sunshine of his Gospel, as by his candle of reason, that we ought to love our enemies, and forgive injuries, unless where it is necessary for our own security or the public good to animadvert upon them, cannot fail of loving even his enemies, and being willing to extend his mercy to the greatest of sinners, were not their punishment necessary. But external necessity of compulsion there can be none upon him, nor can we deny that if there were none other way, if he were not able to raise up children unto Abraham of the most obdurate stones, yet he might relieve them by annihilation: therefore that he does forbear this relief, must be owing to their suffering being a necessary ground whereout to work some far greater good. But the good can be none to himself, for he reaps no advantage from whatever befalls his creatures: whence follows, that it must redound somewhere, though we cannot tell how nor where, among them: and the universe upon the whole contains much greater happiness for this worst of evils, and the wicked courses leading thereinto being permitted, than if they had been prevented.

Yet though we may thus upon occasion extend our imagination a little beyond its ordinary limits with respect to consequences, we cannot do the like with respect to causes: for they lie so complicated in intricate lengths, that we cannot well trace them farther than the depravity of freewill, which we must assign for the source of all the wickedness prevailing or that would prevail, if Providence did not continually watch over its motions, and determine which of them it were proper to permit, and which to restrain.

23. Having thus laid out the scene of our imagination in the manner most

suitable to its dimensions, we can find no room to suspect God the author of sin: for bare permission no more makes him such, than a magistrate licensing a book to be printed makes him author of the composition, or charges him with all the falsities and absurdities that may be contained in it. Neither can we say we are tempted of God, but that we are drawn aside and tempted by our own lusts: for they being always ready to lead us astray, he has no occasion to tempt us into the evils necessary for bringing forth his gracious purposes, because we shall produce enow of ourselves, and his work remains only to restrain us from those that would have been superfluous. Nor yet can we pretend that his permission authorized us in the wickedness we have committed: for had we forborne, there would not have wanted other sinners to have completed the requisite measure of iniquity; so that what we have done was done needlessly, and not under his authority. No more can we deem him the approver of our evil deeds, for were he so, he would give them full scope, even where there were no good to be produced out of them: but we see he has discouraged them by the mischiefs and punishments consequent upon them, by the moral senses and faculty of reason he has given us; therefore we must look upon them as odious and detestable in his sight, notwithstanding his permitting them sometimes. As a man may suffer a practice he detests, where the preventing it would be attended with worse inconveniences, or swallow a medecine he nauseates for the re-establishment of his health, or give it to his children for the like salutary purpose.

Hence it appears that he has established an essential difference in actions, some being made naturally productive of enjoyment, others of suffering: and if he permits some of the latter to take place, it is not that he has altered their nature, but because he purposes to work out a greater good from the mischiefs they engender. As when a man undertakes some very laborious task, it is not that he sees anything to like in the fatigue, but for the sake of greater advantage he expects to work out thereby. Nor does this contradict what was said before, that when the Lord looked upon all the lines in his plan of Providence, behold they were very good: for as dark and rugged and deformed objects may become beautiful in composition, by setting off the brighter figures of a picture, so what is evil and mischievous may become good in a plan, where the more perfect parts must fall to pieces without it.

24. Nothing we do can in the least either increase or diminish the happiness of God, either give him joy or vexation, no not for a moment: therefore in philosophical strictness there is nothing either pleasing or displeasing to him; but we take our ideas from our transactions among one another. Men are induced to do kindness by pleasing them, and the contrary upon being displeased; therefore, according to the return we receive at their hands, we judge them pleased or displeased with what we have done: and this judgment we have so frequent occasion to pass that it becomes habitual, and we cannot disjoin the idea of pleasure in the Agent from the acts of kindness ordinarily consequent thereupon. Hence we fall unavoidably into the same apprehensions with respect to God, of whom we can neither think nor speak, otherwise than as being pleased or displeased with actions according to the manner of his treating them. Since then we know that some kinds of behaviour are of a nature to engage his bountiful favour towards us, others to draw down his vengeance upon us, we may justly style the former pleasing and agreeable, the latter displeasing and odious in his sight, because the like follow from either, as would have been brought upon us by a

man in whose power we were, upon being pleased or displeased. To attempt to scrutinize how God himself stands affected, would be an idle and useless as well as presumptuous speculation; for his treatment of us being the only thing that concerns us to know, ought to denominate the quality of our actions: and on this respect we shall find an essential difference between them, some having a natural tendency directly opposite to that of others.

God has implanted the desire of happiness or enjoyment in our natures to be the constant spring of our action: appetite first directs to the means of enjoyment, and this is our proper guide so long as we have none other to follow. When reason opens, it discovers the errors of appetite, and points to a distant good lying beyond that of present gratification; this then we are to follow as most beneficial to our interests: yet appetite still deserves our regard in such of her calls as reason declares innocent, for present gratification is a benefit whenever not attended with future inconvenience. But our reason proves dark, narrow, and defective; therefore it behoves us to avail ourselves of the united reason and experience of other persons among whom we converse, or of those that have gone before us: so the rules they have formed are our further direction in matters whereof we cannot fully judge of the expedience, and our habitual attachment as well to rules we have stricken out ourselves, as to those received from good authority, generate the moral senses.

Of rules some are calculated upon observation of the things about us relative to the uses, accommodations, and enjoyments of life; these we style prudential. Others are drawn from the idea of Providence or general government of affairs throughout the world: and these point out to us what is pleasing and displeasing to God, that is, what things he has appointed in his disposition of causes to bring good or evil upon us, though we do not clearly understand in what manner or by what media they produce them. From these last arise our highest moral sense or spirit of Religion, whose notices, where it is pure and genuine, deserve our strictest attention and fullest obedience, as being our surest indication and evidence of a conduct most beneficial to ourselves: and this natural tendency of these rules, though perhaps not particularly discernible by us, is the real foundation whereon they stand. Nor is the case different if there be any given extraordinarily, by other means than human reason or observation, for God wants nothing of us, so can enjoin us nothing but for our benefit: therefore his commands may at the same time be considered as advices of one who perfectly knows the nature of all his works, their mutual relations or dependencies, and what dispositions of mind or courses of behaviour will lead to our greatest advantage.

Thus we see the aim whereto all our guidances conduct us, whether rule, or reason, or appetite, is none other than our good, and we have no cause to esteem anything good unless recommended as such by one of those ways: so that it would be absurd and unnatural to do what we have cause to believe will end in our damage, although God be able to work out some unknown advantage therefrom; nor have we any warrant or excuse for doing evil that good may come of it.

25. But to prevent mistakes, it is necessary we should understand what is meant by doing evil that good may come of it: for in some senses of evil, it is not only allowable, but obligatory upon us to do it for the good to redound therefrom. For everything irksome or disgustful to the senses is an evil considered apart in itself, and so any man will judge it: for if he were forced upon some slavish drudgery, or had a nauseous potion poured down

his throat, he would esteem it an injury and damage done to him. Therefore whenever we enter upon a toilsome work, or take a dose of physic, it is doing evil that good may come of it: so is every act of self-denial we practise. Nay, the very essence of Prudence consists in nothing else, for appetite prompts us fast enough to our immediate good, so the office of Prudence and duty is none other, than to restrain us from this good in prospect of a greater advantage lying beyond.

Nor are there instances wanting even of moral evil being deemed justifiable, such as procuring intelligence of an enemy's counsels by bribery, encouraging desertions, enticing away the workmen of persons abroad having invented a new manufacture, publishing rewards for rogues to betray one another. Some righteous people are for conniving at brothels, because, say they, it saves many an innocent creature from destruction: for the vicious will take their course somewhere, and if you do not allow them the commerce of women as vicious as themselves, they will use all their art and industry to seduce the virtuous, or else perhaps turn to a more detestable species of lewdness. It has been laid down as a rule that you must breed up your children to have a little pride of themselves, because this will preserve them from mean company, who would corrupt their morals. And a man may sometimes find it prudent to stir up a less dangerous passion in himself, to assist in overcoming others more pernicious, which he cannot master by the force of reason and resolution.

In all these cases men do, or at least encourage the doing evil, that good may come of it, but then the good to result therefrom is supposed to be known, and the evil necessary for the attainment of it: upon which supposition the evil cannot be called such in common propriety of speech, which estimates actions, according to the whole amount of the consequences taken into contemplation. Therefore by evil is naturally understood whatever our judgment, or rules, or moral senses warn us against as productive of more mischief than advantage upon the whole sequel of its effects: and this evil it would be highly imprudent and foolish to do in expectation that Providence will work out a greater unknown good therefrom. For what is this but giving a reason for running contrary to reason, and laying it down as a rule to act in opposition to all rules? than which nothing can be more preposterous, or inconsistent with itself.

Nor can we pretend a zeal for the glory of God as being manifested in our wickedness: for it is more manifest in our good deeds, which he giveth us both to will and to do. We have cause to glorify his wisdom for the good uses to which he turns the follies and sins of men: but we have the like cause to glorify it, and much greater to glorify his goodness, for the powers and opportunities enabling, the dispositions inclining, them to do well; and the successes, sometimes wonderful successes, wherewith he blesses their endeavours in the great advancement of their own happiness thereby, or that of their fellow-creatures. The permission of evil, both natural and moral, is so far from being in itself a topic of praise, that it has constantly proved a stumbling-block, which we could never get over, if there were not such innumerable instances of provision made for preventing and escaping it, as fully evidence the infinite goodness and perfect holiness of our supreme Governor: and it is from this part of his character we conclude, there is no evil permitted unless necessary to accomplish some gracious and holy purpose. Since then Providence, although sometimes bringing good out of evil, brings it forth more frequently from good; we have a better chance of giving occasion for the divine glory to manifest

itself in that unknown benefit which may be worked out from our actions, by doing good than evil.

26. But it is said, offences must needs come. What then? do we know when there is need, or what particular necessity there is for any one of them to come? What though the madness of the times in the grand rebellion has laid the foundation of our liberty: does this justify the parties possessed with it, who could not possibly foresee this happy event, nor had anything further in view than gratifying their ambition and indulging their angry humours? or is this a reason why we should wish to follow their steps, from which we can see nothing but misery and confusion likely to ensue? Perhaps our constitution may not yet be completely perfect, and Providence may have some secret good purpose in view by permitting those torrents of slander and calumny that pour weekly upon our places of public resort. But there is no good discernible by us likely to come of it: for this epidemical distemper of swallowing all kinds of slander with greediness, must render us all in our turns contemptible and odious to one another, which will naturally disable us from acting vigorously against a foreign enemy. For strength consists in unanimity, but what hearty concurrence can there be among people who detest and despise one another?

Therefore it becomes every good patriot to discourage this humour of reviling and vilifying: if we differ in opinion, let us treat one another like reasonable creatures, not like a pack of snarling dogs; and support our own sentiments by calm argumentation, not endeavour to run down all opposers by joining in with the cry of every yelping cur that opens only because he is hungry, or because he has none other way to make himself taken notice of so upon all other occasions we are to consult our rules and our reason: for they are the proper criteria to distinguish what is needful to be done, or to be omitted. Rectitude of Will consists in a steady adherence to the dictates of understanding, nor can we conceive it otherwise in God himself; but his intelligence extends to all nature and all futurity, therefore it is no wonder he sees a rectitude and holiness in measures, where we find the contrary.

Whence it follows that we shall imitate him not by doing the same things that he has permitted, but by following the same guidance, to wit, the line of our intelligence; for so does he too follow his intelligence, only his is boundless, whereas ours stands confined within the narrow compass of reason and information that he has vouchsafed us. Within this compass then we are to look for his declared Will, which alone we are to obey, for all else belongs to the secret Will, which can be no rule to us, because founded upon knowledge it is impossible for us to fathom; and to attempt to meddle in matters he has reserved to his own disposal, would be the most consummate impudence and daring presumption.

For God alone, who discerns the remotest issues of things, can know what evils are capable of being turned to good purposes, and how to set bounds to iniquity that it overflow not too far: therefore the permission of evil is a branch of the divine prerogative, not to be encroached upon without sacrilege. Such encroachment is like touching the ark of God with unhallowed hands, from which nothing could be expected but certain destruction. For what can be more arrogant and impious, than doing wickedly to find employment for Providence? It is the same as saying to God, I will do all the mischief I can: now do thou produce good out of it. This seems to exceed the rebellion of Lucifer, for he sought only to make himself inde

pendent on the Almighty: whereas the sinner transgressing upon this pretence would make God his Servant, by setting him at pleasure to clean away his dirty work, or turn it into sweetness and salubrity.

27. Nor perhaps would men ever find temptation to do evil that good may come of it, if they were apprised what kind of good may be expected therefrom; for it is not their own good but that of other creatures. They flatter themselves with a notion that because God has permitted their evil, he must be pleased with it, and will reward them accordingly: whereas we have shown, he may permit a thing he is displeased with, and consequently the perpetrator can look for nothing else than to feel the effects of his displeasure: but he permits the sin, because he foresees the mischiefs consequent upon it will work out some signal advantages to his creatures. Would men consider the matter in this light, which is the true one, they would not be so fond of running themselves into misery for the sake of some unknown profit to redound therefrom to others.

They do not act so in their temporal concerns, though there are the same grounds for running counter to common Prudence as duty: for we trust that all the diseases and distresses of life have their secret uses, or else they would not be permitted, for our gracious Governor is able to deliver us from them all, and would do it but for that reason. Yet who ever purposely ruins his health, or throws away his fortune, because Providence will not suffer these misfortunes to befall needlessly, nor without producing a greater benefit to mankind therefrom? How much more absurd then would it be, to incur miseries to whose intenseness and duration we can set no bounds, because there are reasons to be given that they would not be inflicted, unless necessary to secure the happiness of other Beings, and because the universe upon the whole is better with them than without them? Such service is not required at our hands: Moses was rebuked for desiring that the wrath of God might be turned upon himself from the Israelites: and certainly the offer was made inconsiderately, for such romantic zeal for the public good is not in human nature, nor was any man ever really actuated by it, whatever he might persuade himself.

Nothing is more deceitful than the heart of man, or more difficult for him to discover than his own true springs of action: there are many latent motives which prompt us without our perceiving them, many plausible colourings that claim to be the sources of motions we had before determined upon. Nor can an observant by-stander fail of seeing that when men do wrong, there is always some private passion, or interest, or ill-humour, or perverseness of temper leading them thereto which they are unwilling to acknowledge, and then, if they have been plunged deep in enthusiastic notions, they raise this idle pretence to an extravagant sanctity in sinning for the divine glory, to cast a glare for blinding their own conscience, or more commonly to cover their contempt of the divine authority from the world. Thus while they would seem to be labouring after an unknown remote good, beyond all reach of human sagacity or foresight to find out, they are in reality pursuing present gratification in disregard of a good that their judgment, their moral sense, or their conscience, might make manifest; in which indulgence of the cravings of appetite, or inordinate desire, the very essence of depravity and unholiness consists.

28. I have been the more prolix and particular upon this Article, because having spoken of an universal Providence extending to all events, whether fortunate or disastrous, and appointing or permitting all the actions of men, whether good or evil, occasion might be taken from hence to imagine them

all equally pleasing to God, and alike the proper objects of our endeavours: which being a most dangerous and fatal error, subversive of Religion, morality, and even common prudence, it seemed more excusable to be redundant, than wanting in the cares taken to obviate it. But this poisonous fruit is not now very common, as growing from an injudicious intenseness of thought upon the manner of the divine government: a root but little abounding at this season. For easiness and indolence of temper seems the prevailing humour; men's thoughts being commonly taken up with the amusement of the day, or of the hour, unless perhaps when ambition, or covetousness, or some other darling passion engages them a little further. A few transient ideas of a general Providence content them, without troubling themselves to examine particularly by what channels the administration of it is carried on; whereby they luckily escape the danger of scrutinizing further than their lights would enable them to do it safely.

As far as appears among our cotemporaries they never sin upon principle, nor with any more distant view than indulgence of the passion that happens to come uppermost, unless there be some who seriously hold the methodistical doctrine, That a man must be in a state of damnation before he can enter a state of salvation; from which naturally follows, that he should make himself damnably wicked as fast he can, that he may have the quicker passage into righteousness. But these gentry, having an utter detestation of all human reasonings, are not likely to meddle with my speculations: so that what is offered above will be superfluous to the generality, who may therefore skim it lightly over, as they do most other things put into their hands, except it be a lampoon or a piece of scandal.

But as there are persons who bestow more thoughts than common upon the courses of events throughout the world, it was my business to provide for what difficulties I could imagine might arise in their minds; more especially to guard on all sides against whatever ill consequences might be drawn from things I had advanced myself. Therefore if there be any to whom the positions maintained in the Chapters of Providence and Freewill, or in several other places, shall prove a stumbling-block, as seeming to make God the author of sin, and to encourage immorality by representing it alike productive of good with the strictest virtue, the endeavours here used for removing that imputation are intended for their service; whereto it is hoped they may prove effectually conducive, provided so much more than the fashionable attention be given them, as might be expected from persons who may have any doubt arising upon a point of the utmost importance.

29. But as the imaginations of men are formed upon very different scales, not all equally capacious, those conceptions which are exoteric and wholesome to some, will still remain esoteric and dangerous to others. But it is of no avail to our Maker what we think of him or of his works, nor does he require anything of us either in thought or deed, unless for our own good: therefore we serve him best when we think of both in the manner best adapted to our own respective uses. Such as have the fullest idea of the divine Government and fatherly tenderness may look upon an event happening as a certain evidence of its being the Will of God; and best that it should happen: therefore not only the misfortunes and troubles befalling in the World, the wicked deeds perpetrated by others, but even the follies they have committed themselves, may be matter of no discontent to them; being persuaded that all these things will turn out to some greater advantage, or else they would not have been suffered. Yet though they are not sorry at what has happened, they may be sorry that it should have been

necessary to happen; which sentiment will urge them sufficiently to avoid the like whenever they do not see that necessity, that is in everything future lying within their power: for the evidence alleged of evils being best, belongs only to those already past and done, which manifests the sacred Will in those instances.

So that notwithstanding their resignation under the faults they have been permitted to do, they will strive against them for the future, as earnestly as they could without such acquiescence, and be ready to join heartily in that petition, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven. By which must be meant the apparent Will: for the secret is already done throughout every region of the universe on earth, as completely as it is in heaven. Nor is there anything in the nature of this contented temper, rightly considered, to abate our vigilance over our future conduct. What if a man upon having a stone fall upon his head, should believe it happened for the best? nobody would think this a reason why he should put himself in the way of another stone, or forbear to take the proper caution for preventing the like accident again. So although upon having offended once he should suppose it happened for the best because permitted, yet if he judges soundly, he can draw no reason in the world from thence why he should offend a second time, or should not take warning from his first failure, to guard against the temptations that led him thereinto.

30. But I fear such soundness of judgment is not common, nor perhaps possible to be fully attained: therefore an easiness under the reflection of past misconduct cannot be generally recommended with safety. For our desires naturally flow from our likings: according as things have affected us formerly we are apt to desire and endeavour the repetition of them, and uneasiness at what we have done is the strongest spring to drive us into a contrary conduct. So it will be best to cultivate a vexation at the evil committed by ourselves and an abhorrence against it elsewhere: provided we can disjoin the offender from the offence, so as to love the one while we detest the other. This we do easily in our own case, for we do not hate and detest ourselves how much soever convinced of having grossly misbehaved, from whence we may learn to do it in the case of our neighbour.

The Romish doctors reckon three stages in the passage from vice to virtue: Attrition, Contrition, and Repentance. The first is a sorrow for the mischiefs men have brought upon their own heads by their ill doings; the second a sorrow for the doings themselves, and the last a thorough change of mind or hearty disposition to practise them no more. There may be some, perhaps, so happily constituted as to find the two former needless, being able to begin directly with the last. It is not difficult in the common affairs of life, where there is no strong passion or habit in the way: a man upon finding some practice he has followed a little inconvenient to his health or his fortune, may take warning from thence to leave it off without a violent regret at what he has done. But to attain a perfect unconcernedness at everything past, yet without being a whit the less careful of his measures for the future, is more plausible in theory, than feasible in practice.

On the other hand, there are persons of so little sensibility that, though they smart severely for their follies, the moment the smart is over they think no more of it than if nothing had ever happened amiss. With these people it is necessary to begin at the first stage: for till you can bring them to carry their reflections a little beyond the present feeling, you will never work upon them at all.

But for the most part contrition is the proper entrance into the way of amendment, and the more hearty the sorrow, the more effectually and speedily it will forward us on the way. Nor is the detestation of vice of little avail to help us in our progress, for what we have been used to look upon with odium, will be more apt to grieve us when falling upon ourselves: therefore censure when properly applied is serviceable, not only as a species of punishment for the wicked, but as a preservative for the good. But though the aversion ought to terminate in the practice without extending to the practiser, when the separation is possible, yet I fear it is not everybody that can make it. For the vulgar, little used to distinguish further than their senses or their passions can guide them, judge of things in the lump: if they like the person, everything he does must be right; if once persuaded of anything wrong in him, he must be capable of all that is bad.

I suppose it is upon this principle that our party-leaders have encouraged the ridiculing and aspersing one another's characters, even upon topics no ways relative to the matters in contest: for the mob being no judges of those matters cannot estimate the man by his measures, but the measures by the man; therefore the fixing an ill impression of the one, is thought the most effectual method of giving them a distaste for the other. Whether this method be justifiable, or not carried to greater lengths than necessary, I leave to others to determine; as likewise whether the justifiableness of it be considered at all, or only the gratification of resentment, ill-humour, or selfish desires. But with regard to heinous enormities, especially such as may prove contagious, one must not be too rigorous with persons of gross apprehensions, in requiring them to distinguish between the vice and the vicious: because if you will not allow them to detest the offender, they will be apt to think lightly of the offence, whereby they may fall into great hazard of being infected by it.

This may account for those cruel severities the Israelites were taught to exercise upon their corrupt and idolatrous neighbours, for they seem to have had little rational or refined in their religion, but were altogether guided by appearances and sensitive ideas: and with such there is no medium, they must either love or hate to extravagance.

Therefore if they had been allowed to intermingle among idolaters, or even to treat them with common humanity, they would have taken a liking to their follies; and there was no way of securing them against the contagion, unless by raising an utter aversion to the persons infected, and a persuasion that no usage could be too bad for them to receive. But even the populace of our times are not quite so gross and stony; they can detest a vile profligate enough to make them abhor his practices, without wishing to knock out his brains: so they may be restrained from giving such terrible proofs of their righteousness, without endangering the loss of it.

Yet the ideas to be infused into them must be accommodated to the size and shape of the vessel; for it is in vain to think of making men perfect at once, or inspiring them with better sentiments than they are capable of bearing: a mistake your very righteous people often fall upon, to the disappointment of their own purpose, and great detriment of those they take in hand. But as the husbandman studies the nature of his soils, as well as of his seeds, so whoever would sow the seeds of virtue must observe diligently the characters and apprehensions of the recipients, striving to improve them in those particulars where an improvement may be made: for the same step may be an advance in one man which would be going backward in another. Therefore discretion must be used, and no easy matter it will

prove, to discern what is an approach towards holiness in each person, according to his situation, keeping it always in aim to bring him by practicable gradations to an universal benevolence even to the worst of men, so as to show them all the kindness that may not prove an encouragement to vice, or endanger mischief to himself: in imitation of that power who causeth his sun to shine upon the good and upon the evil, and sendeth his rain upon the just and the unjust; and we trust will turn every evil permitted, to answer some good and holy purpose.

31. Having now explained my notions of the esoteric and exoteric doctrines in the clearest and fullest manner I was able, I hope they will appear upon a careful and candid examination to be the same in substance, varying only in language (Permission being used instead of Provision, or as I may say, the latter being translated by the former;) and in the method of laying out our objects according to the scene beheld in our imagination. When withdrawn from the hurry of sensible objects we give the full stretch to contemplation, we may then survey the divine economy from beginning to end, and though our views will still be very short and imperfect with respect to particulars, yet we may clearly discern so much as to see, that all events must be determined by their proper adequate causes, these again by others prior from whence they were generated, and so on without interruption until we find their source in the immediate acts of the Almighty: whose omniscience will not suffer us to imagine he performs any without knowing, or without thinking what they will produce in the remotest or minutest consequences. Whence follows the absolute dominion of Providence; nothing ever happening that was not noticed and marked down in the original plan. We may then turn round to the other side of the prospects and perceive that events do not terminate in what we discern or feel of them, but draw on further consequences depending upon one another in an endless succession: by which we may understand how every line in the plan of Providence, however appearing otherwise in some particular links of the chain, may be drawn in wisdom and goodness for promoting the advantage of the creatures. Upon this view it will appear that God is righteous in all his works, gracious and holy in all his doings, the very provisions made for physical and moral evil being calculated for increasing the sum of happiness and holiness throughout the universe.

From this idea of universal Providence we may learn to conduct ourselves within our own little province: for such we have in the administration of affairs, by means of the power and freewill allotted us. Nor does the divine dominion destroy our freedom; for freedom has no concern with antecedent causes, nor the provisions giving them birth, but solely with the force or restraint there might be upon our future volitions and actions, and experience convinces us that we have a certain scope to range in, exempt from such force or restraint. Within this compass then it behoves us, if I may be pardoned the expression, to lay our plan of Providence in imitation of the most perfect model: drawing our lines, so far as our best judgment can extend them, with a view to produce the greatest good, upon their whole length, to our fellow-creatures or ourselves, that can be effected upon every particular occasion. And because we are liable to inordinate passions too strong for judgment to overpower, it is incumbent upon us to endeavour after a holiness of temper, exempt from malice or envy, or sensuality, or selfishness, or indolence, which might draw us aside from the prosecution of our plan.

But as a traveller, while passing along the road, must observe the tracks before him and keep his eye attentive to the objects near at hand, nor can stand to gaze at the distant horizon: so we, when occupied in the common business of life, cannot retain the whole extent of our contemplative scenes in mind. We then find our prospect reduced to scantier limits; the chains of causes appear broken short; nature, chance, and freewill, seem original sources of events; and though there may still remain a general idea of Providence, we cannot trace it up to its first appointments, but it presents to our view a superintending power, continually guiding the motions of second causes by fresh and occasional operations, though when or how the touch is given we cannot perceive. In this partial scene of things we have other sources to assign for all the evils that happen, so it becomes us to ascribe the good alone to Providence, together with the purpose of producing further good out of the evils permitted. Yet permission is no sanction or encouragement, but wickedness still remains the object of vengeance and displeasure to God, who has nothing unholy in his nature: therefore we cannot make ourselves more agreeable to him than by labouring, so far as our imperfections will allow, to imitate his holiness.

32. Thus we see the two systems, though proceeding by different routes, conduct to one and the same end, namely; to give us the purest idea of our Governor, and most heavenly disposition of mind we are capable of attaining. But if we go to blend them together, it will utterly spoil our work; which then can answer no end at all, unless to involve us in doubt and perplexity. It will be like joining the halves of two maps cast upon different scales, from whence nothing but incoherence and absurdity can ensue: there will be rivers pointing their course against mountains, private gardens bigger than the adjacent country, and streets of cities leading into the sea. It may be presumed that all the difficulties, started against the ways of Providence, arise from this motley mixture of gross and refined notions: for there are people too shrewd to rank among the vulgar, yet too dull ever to become adepts: these operators are perpetually mingling the strokes of one system among the other, whereby they make neither uniform, but mangle them both, and in this condition it is no wonder they appear distorted and disfigured.

For if we behold the vulgar scheme with the glass of contemplation, we shall find it abounding in inconsistences; effects without a cause; freewill acting upon no inducement; all things guided by wisdom, yet for the most part depending upon contingencies; the power of God irresistible, yet many things done contrary to his Will; nothing hidden from his sight, yet innumerable trifling and filthy objects unbecoming his regard: Providence ever watchful over events, yet permitting those to take effect which were not intended, nor approved. These the plain man does not perceive, for he takes his ideas singly, so discerns not the discordance that would be found upon comparing them together: or if a difficulty occurs, he can acquiesce without expecting to solve it, being sensible of his ignorance, and satisfied that many things may be true, though to him appearing unaccountable.

On the other hand, if we investigate the chain of causes to the fountain head, without turning the opposite way to consider what consequences may ensue beyond our immediate notice, we shall still retain our vulgar idea of terminating all events in the uses of man; and then our reference of them to the divine appointment will have a mischievous effect, representing many provisions therein as trifling, unkind, and unholy.

Nevertheless, every science must have a beginning, nor can one expect

to rise from the popular system, at a leap: in the interim of our progress there will arise doubts and difficulties, for these are ordinarily the avenues to knowledge. Yet they will not discompose us so long as we bear in mind that we are but learners, for this reflection will satisfy, that we are not fully masters of any point that may seem to cast an imputation upon Providence. For when we consider, that unholiness, by the essence of it, must proceed from some passion, or selfishness, or intemperance of mind, we shall lay it down as a fundamental principle, that nothing of this sort can have place in the most perfect; and shall esteem it the nearest approach towards perfection, to cultivate the opposite character in ourselves.

33. But then let us not suffer the desire of holiness to carry us beyond the bounds of discretion, nor mislead us in judging wherein its essence consists: an error that men of no small credit among the multitude have fallen into. For they observing justly that study, meditation, prayer, thanksgiving, and the externals of Religion, are the main supports of holiness, place the whole of it in them; so would have men think of nothing else, but employ every day and every hour of the day in a continual round of these exercises. Whereas holiness does not consist in them, but in the disposition of mind to be contracted by them, which disposition is better forwarded by the life and spirit of our devotions, than by the length or frequency of them.

For it is not in human nature to keep up a glow of fervency further than to a certain period, according to the strength and present condition of our organs: all beyond is perfunctory and unavailing form, no more a nourishment to the mind than eating beyond one's appetite is a nourishment to the body. Besides that the practice of a rational and useful life is equally, if not more necessary to strengthen our sentiments: for obedience is better than sacrifice, and infixes the principle, whereon it was performed, deeper than any mental efforts can do. Nor would it be more absurd for a soldier to desert his post that he may lie lurking about his General's tent, lest he should love his reverence by losing sight of him, than for us to neglect our active duties, that we may attend more closely to those of devotion.

It is not by such exercises alone that we can imitate the most perfect models: God himself not only receives the adorations of Angels and Men, but likewise feeds the young ravens and clothes the lilies of the field. We have offered reasons to make it probable, that the blessed spirits above do not spend their whole time in empty Hallelujahs, but are continually employed on high behests to assist in administering the courses of nature, and fortune. And God has placed us under a necessity of attending to sensible objects for the support and convenience of ourselves and our fellow-creatures. Let us then in all our measures have a respect to their use, and practise religious exercises so far as they tend to give us a happy turn of mind, dependent on Providence, contented with its dispensations, and pleased with being under its protection: and make us industrious within our narrow sphere of action to maintain the order and promote the happiness of the world wherewith we stand connected.

Perfection is not to be attained without attending carefully to all branches of the duty allotted us: but he that aims only at one point commonly overshoots his mark; nor is it unusual for men to become unholy, through an intemperate zeal of being holy. It gives them narrow notions of the supreme Being, as receiving actual delight from their services, and uneasily anxious to have them paid; it keeps them inexpert in their business, and useless in their stations, makes them morose and rancorous against those whom they suppose the enemies of heaven, fills them with spiritual pride

and contempt of mankind; puts them out of humour with the world about them, with the condition of their own nature; and overwhelms them with despondencies at their not attaining impracticable lengths. So that there is such a thing as being too pious, where the piety is not rational and genuine, and the greater lengths it runs, so much the worse: as a man, whose money is in counterfeit coin, the more he has of it, will only find it the greater toil and burden.

CHAP. VI.

THINGS PROVIDENTIAL.

To what purpose, it may be asked, do we make these the subject of a particular inquiry? or what can be expected from the title of this chapter more than we have already descanted upon in our Chapter on Providence? We have there shown that all things derive their essence, and all events their accomplishment, from that source; that small as well as great, the veriest trifles equally with the most momentous concerns, were comprised within the orignial plan. The grovelling earth-worm, the worthless sea-weed, the dirt we trample upon, were works of the same hand that made the human soul with all her powers of intelligence, with all her stores of science and accomplishment. The crawling of emmets and falling of leaves were contained in the same scheme wherein were projected the rise of empires, and the exact period of their continuance. A sparrow no more falls to the ground than a kingdom is overthrown; a bubble no more bursts than a world is dissolved: not an atom stirs throughout the material universe, nor a fancy starts up in the imagination of any animal, without the knowledge and attention, without the permission or appointment, of our almighty and all-provident Governor. Even the wild rovings of chance took their rise from certain causes, and circumstances occasioning them to proceed in that manner, which flowed successively from prior causes through channels whose sources were first opened by Omnipotence, with full intelligence of whatever was done, and clear foresight of all the minutest consequences that should result therefrom.

From whence it may be inferred the epithet Providential was superfluous, all things being such without exception; nor is there any room for a distinction between events that are providential, and others that are not. But, notwithstanding the universal dependence of events upon certain causes provided in wisdom for bringing them respectively forth, it does not follow that the epithet providential, applied to distinguish some of them from the rest, must be an insignificant term. For we have seen before that derivatives do not always carry the whole extent of their primitives: everything done for one's self is not a selfish act, nor is a man a whit the more selfish for taking an honest and prudent care of his own concerns. In like manner, neither is everything denominated Providential that proceeds from the hand of Providence, but such works only wherein there are marks of that hand discernible by human understanding. Thus it appears the epithet we have now taken under consideration is a term belonging to the exoteric language, having no force in describing the real nature of things, but the appearance of them in our narrow comprehensions.

To discern the system of Providence completely, we ought to know the

precise quantity of good the creatures are capable of receiving, and quantity of evil necessary to support that good: what else besides good, but consistent with it, may be contained in the general design; the various states of perceptive Beings, according to their situation with respect to one another, or to matter; the several compositions and organizations of material substance, together with the secondary qualities and essences resulting therefrom; their positions, and that of their component parts; the motions both external and internal among them; their mutual operations, and extent of their influence upon one another; the effects as well immediate as remote of their action, and tendency of it through successive channels to accomplish the purpose intended. But this we may see at first glance is an immense ocean of science unnavigable by human sagacity: should we attempt to compass it, we should find ourselves bewildered in the multitude of objects, and intricacy of causes depending upon one another, in a line further than our eye could stretch to; and, by endeavouring to grasp the whole scheme of Providence, should quite lose our idea of it, and see nothing but inextricable confusion.

2. Therefore it behoves us to select such parts of the scene before us, as we can draw upon the scanty scale of our imagination, so as to discern the objects clearly, and trace out their mutual dependencies. Nor need we fear doing an injury to the glory of God by this partial consideration of his works: for that advances it best which manifests it most fully to us. He wants not glory from us for his own benefit or amusement, but because a strong and well-grounded apprehension of his Providence would fill us with satisfaction of mind, at being constantly under a gracious protection, that will guard us from every evil unproductive of greater advantage: and is the main basis both of prudence and benevolence, by insuring to us, that whatever we do well, shall be attended with success either in present or in futurity, and making the good of our fellow-creatures to be our own interest.

But it has been seen in the foregoing Chapters that, as our organs of imagination are constituted, it would be mischievous to refer everything to the divine appointment. An intelligence extending to all minutest events together with their remotest consequences, is an idea much too large for our comprehension: no man can conceive the possibility of it, how well soever his reason may convince him of the fact. And there are some trivial and unsightly objects, which to join in the same thought with our supreme Governor, would give us unworthy notions of him, and lessen our sense of his purity, his Majesty, and his Holiness. This being the case, it is allowable and commendable, because necessary and expedient, for us to confine our ideas to second causes, where we cannot trace them satisfactorily to the first.

Some effects we see by experience proceed regularly from the primary properties of bodies, or their secondary qualities resulting from texture and organization: others follow upon their application to one another, without our knowing what brought them together: others again are the product of voluntary action. These three then, Nature, Chance, and Free-will, we are justified in regarding upon common occasions as original springs of events, because for the most part we want largeness of view to discern their dependence upon higher sources. They are all the causes giving birth to the phenomena falling under our observation: but among them we find visible footsteps of a choice, and contrivance, that requires another cause to account for it. For nature operates necessarily; chance

works at random without preference of one thing above another, and though voluntary Agents proceed upon an idea of something they are about to do, yet we see them sometimes acting with a wisdom not their own, towards the accomplishment of a design they had not in their thoughts.

Whatever therefore bears the marks of a wisdom not belonging to the known causes producing it, we may properly style Providential; which term being applied to things, not in respect of their real essence, but of their appearance in our eyes, must of course be relative to particular persons; that being providential to one man which is not so to another, according to their respective understanding and lights. Nevertheless, there are some things appearing obviously so to every eye that will cast an attentive look upon them, and are rather unheeded than unseen by the generality of mankind. These lucid spots of our prospect, wherein the Image of Wisdom and Providence stands reflected, we shall take for the subject of our present inquiry.

3. And it is by this reflected Image that the very being of a God is most commonly manifested. We have attempted other proofs of his existence in the last volume drawn from the locality, the numbers, the different properties, of all substances falling under our notice, which could not exist in that manner necessarily or of themselves, and therefore require a First cause to assign their several stations, essences, and qualities. But this kind of argumentation is of too abstracted a nature to serve for common use, as requiring a particular preparation, and stretch of the faculties to pursue it without losing the track. Most men, and perhaps all men upon most occasions, content themselves with the three causes mentioned in the preceding section, without looking forward for any further sources from whence their powers of operation were derived. But when they behold them working with an art and contrivance that is not in their nature, when they see necessity, casualty, and ignorance, bringing excellent schemes to perfection: this at once convinces them of a superior intelligence, which requires no nice investigation of causes to discover. For when Agents void of Wisdom act wisely, it is plain there must be some hand to conduct them; though we may not be able to perceive by what springs or channels of communication it operates.

So that here wants no long train of reasoning to lead us into the knowledge of a Providence. Penetration and closeness of thought have no further use in this case than to discover the fallacy of those sophisms wherewith persons of a perverse subtilty of refinement have overclouded the most apparent truths. The plain man needs no assistance here from the speculatist, but may say to him as Diogenes did to Alexander, Only please to stand out of my Sun-shine Let him but observe the phenomena before him, and he may leave them to work their own effect upon his imagination: it is his part to take care they do not pass without his Notice, for while remaining unheeded, they can work no effect at all; and if not fixed in the remembrance, their effect will be but transitory and unprofitable. If he has not been used to look upon these objects, he will do well to begin with those he finds most striking, and apt to raise an admiration in his mind: for admiration is an affection or gentler kind of passion, and the force of passion is necessary to rouse up an habitual insensibility; as physicians cure a palsy by raising a fever.

Extraordinary phenomena, and effects requiring the concurrence of many causes to produce them, affect us most strongly; nor can admiration keep

up her glow without fresh fuel to be supplied by new objects occurring, or at least such as are new to our observance; for when once grown familiar they lose their efficacy upon us. When the Moon interposes between us and the Sun so as to cover his whole Body, it sets every eye agape, because happening but once or twice in an age: but that total eclipse of the Sun of many hours' continuance, varying the employments of life, made every night by the interposition of our own earth, raises emotion in nobody; for this very reason, because it happens every night. The common air we breathe gives us no thought of Providence because it is so common, lying ready at the lips of every animal in plenty enough, and to spare, for the uses of them all: but our food and clothing, being not so copiously dispersed nor obtruded upon us everywhere, make us more attentive to that admirable provision of materials, enabling us to procure them by our care and industry.

Yet though it be expedient to vary our objects of contemplation, it is not so to crowd them too thick: for then they will have no better effect, than if they had not been varied at all. When one reads Derham's physico-theology, the mind is tired with the multiplicity of proofs, which rather overwhelm and benumb the faculty of admiration, than excite it: a short general description of the human mechanism, with a few of the most curious parts, would perhaps have answered the purpose more effectually, than that elaborate treatise. For it is not enough to consider the justness and weight of our evidence, without consulting likewise the capacity and present disposition of the mind, that is to receive it: for the most wholesome aliments crammed immediately will bring on a heaviness instead of enlivening, and the most palatable will nauseate when the appetite is not set towards them. It is a vulgar saying, that one man may lead a Horse to water, but twenty men cannot make him drink: therefore we shall succeed best by watching favourable seasons, such as after an escape from some imminent danger, when the mind is most susceptible of impression, and applying the objects we find most suitable to our temper, as striking most forcibly upon us.

It is a too common mistake, among persons of a pious turn, to take their opinion of things providential from their teachers: the reality of a Providence they may reasonably take upon the credit of others of larger understanding and undoubted integrity, though it is better if they can be brought to see it themselves, and for that purpose they are exhorted to observe things passing providentially around them. But Providential, as has been observed already, does not imply what derives from the hand of Providence, but what carries an evidence of that original, in visible marks upon it: now nothing can be evidence to him who does not discern the force of it with his own eyes. Therefore when things are propounded as providential, let a man examine impartially and courageously whether he feels them operate as such upon his imagination: if he does not, they are not providential to him.

To pretend ourselves convinced of the divine government upon reasons that do not appear valid in our judgment, is a mockery of God and a deception of ourselves! for they will never strengthen our sense of his dominion, the only good fruit expected from them. Our duty is not to make reasons but to search for them, and inculcate such as we find most cogent upon our memory. Nevertheless, though every man must weigh his evidence himself another may point out the sources from whence it is to be fetched, and prepare it for the scale: to which service we shall now

endeavour to lend our helping hand by some few observations that may tend to promote it. For we do not mean to enumerate the evidences of a superintending guidance: this would take up more of our time and labour, than we can spare from other matters, and has already been done sufficiently, as well by divines as philosophers: we only purpose to make some more general observations without regarding whether they be new, or have been made by others before.

4. All effects lying within the reach of our notice were the produce of nature, chance, or freewill: which three therefore are the fields we have to survey. But works performed by the contrivance and industry of man affords us no marks of a superior intelligence, his own power and sagacity being sufficient for their production: yet if we consider his powers of action, the talents of his understanding, the materials he has to work with, none of which he made for himself, we must refer them to the gift of nature: if the circumstances concurring to furnish him with opportunities and motives for acting, the purposes whereto he co-operates, different or even contrary to those he had in view, we must acknowledge chance to have a great share in his proceedings. Wherefore voluntary agency, so far as we have concern with it at present, becomes absorbed into the other two, leaving nature and chance alone for the subject of our examination.

Intelligence is manifested two ways, either by means supplied to answer the end we may conceive to have been had in view, though we do not discern the methods by which they were prepared; or else by the contrivance apparent in productions, though we do not see what end they answer: the former more particularly gives us the display of Providence, the latter of the wisdom wherewith it is administered. But where we can discern both the art and the uses it serves, the evidence is double, and if well attended to must strike with double force upon the mind. Our own pleasure and profit being ever uppermost in our thoughts, whatever contributes to the general convenience and accommodation of human life, wherein we may have a share, is most apt to draw our attention: therefore the good and well being of mankind is the end we can most readily conceive to have been had in view, and the means conducing thereto will be easiest received as evidence of a provident care and concern in supplying them.

As to the brute creation, it is customary to despise them as below the divine regard, yet if there be a man so singularly open-hearted as to deem them, too, and such enjoyments as they are capable of, worth a thought of that power who can think of everything without neglecting anything, he will have a larger field of Providence before him, and find evidences wanting to other people. Nevertheless if we will not allow them to deserve concern for their own sakes, still since many of them are subservient and necessary to our uses, we may look upon the provisions made for their preservation as a remoter means promoting our favourite end. And with respect to insects, and other animals seeming wholly useless, we may discern a contrivance in the methods provided for their breeding and sustenance, though we should not be sensible of any good purpose answered thereby.

5. If we saw a house stored with furniture, utensils, and victuals, the gardens planted with herbs and fruit-trees, the grounds stocked with cows, horses, poultry, and deer, all in a manner fitted for the entertainment and convenience of a family; we should certainly conclude there was some master, who had taken care to provide these supplies for the uses whereto they were respectively proper. Or if an ignorant person went into a room where among scales, weights, compasses, measures, and other things of

common use, he should find quadrants, parallel rulers, theodolites, and armillary spheres, of which he had no notion what they were good for, nor could understand the figures upon them: yet he might know without telling, that these were the works of some artificer proceeding with skill and contrivance, who made them for purposes well worth the care he had bestowed upon them.

In this manner we constantly reason upon common occasions, and there wants only the proper attention to lead us into the like train of thinking upon the phenomena of visible nature. For there we may perceive ample provision made in vast variety for the numerous family of Adam. Corn, fruits, pulse, herbs, cattle, and fowl for our sustenance; wool and flax for our clothing; drugs and simples for our relief; air for our breathing; timber, stone, lime, and brick-earth for our habitation; wood and coal for our firing; beasts of burden for our assistance; winds to purify our atmosphere, to refresh our heats, and waft us from shore to shore; variety of soils and climates to bear us a produce of every kind; dews and rains to make them yield us their increase. The sea, that original source of water so necessary to us for many uses, serves likewise to associate distant nations by opening the communication of commerce. The Sun diffuses his warmth and light to cherish us: the Moon helps to lessen our darkness, and the tides she raises assist our navigation. The distant stars guide us over the boundless ocean and inhospitable desert, extend the fields of science to an immensity of space, and turn the rugged brow of night into a cheerful scene of contemplation.

Even within the narrow compass of our own bodies, we carry about no inconsiderable stores, without which we could not receive benefit from those without us. We have engines of digestion and secretion, springs and channels of circulation, limbs for instruments of action, bones for our support and protection, organs of speech for our mutual intercourse. We have appetites to stimulate, senses to inform, the faculties of remembering, comparing, distinguishing, judging, to enlighten, and reason to direct us. Neither no we want sources of enjoyment and pleasure, either in the capacity of our senses and affections of joy, hope, admiration, and innocent mirth to receive them, or the plentiful supply of external objects fitted to give them.

And among those of nature's productions wherein we do not find our immediate account, we may yet see a variety and regularity of disposition that must be the effect of design and consummate skill to conduct it. The four elements though formed out of the same matter, yet have severally so stable a constitution, that they can mingle perpetually without changing into one another; and by their different commixtures produce other secondary elements, as salts fixed and volatile, acids, alkalies, spirits of different kinds; which being mingled together in suitable proportions generate all the grosser bodies we see and handle. By this wonderful join-work the stores of nature are supplied in an endless multiplicity of species, having their several essences distinguishing them apart, hard or soft, compact or loose, dry or humid, elastic, flexible, unyielding, glutinous, fluid, or coherent.

The earth contains within her bowels abundance of soils, stones, fossils, minerals, metals, ductile, malleable, fusible, brittle, or liquid, and disposes the parts of her diamonds and her crystals with such an amazing artifice, as that though some of the compactest substances, yet they afford an easy passage for the light to traverse through them in all directions. The air sustains vapours of opposite qualities, aqueous, nitrous, and inflammable; some to fall in dews and rains, some to bind up the hail, the snow, and hoar frost,

and some to dart in lightnings and meteors. Water serves for the basis of many liquors, varying according to the channels through which it passes, whether the strata of earth, or little vessels of fruits and plants, or secretory ducts of animals. Fire performs the twofold office of giving heat and light: by the former it operates diversely in baking, melting, consolidating, dissipating, or evaporating; in the latter it appears under seven principal forms besides the multitudes of colours made of them by composition, and it seems to be the principal giving activity to hot seeds, and drugs, and spirituous liquors.

Then if we turn our eyes upon the vegetable tribes, we may see them, in countless multitudes of trees, shrubs, weeds, mosses, funguses, cover the ground or produced in the water: each growing, spreading, and flourishing by peculiar laws adapted to its own kind, and all worked in such exactness and nicety of art, as the greatest human ingenuity could not imitate: their sap vessels curiously bound up together within the stem, or dispersed among the roots and branches, their leaves wrought much finer than needlework, their flowers of many different makes, hues, and odours, their seed diversely produced, lodged, and constituted, and their several parts having different tastes or qualities dependent upon their internal texture.

Yet are these wonders of the vegetative world surpassed by those of the animal, whose frame contains a more complicated machinery capable of more admirable play: for besides the engines of growth and nutriment analogous in both, the latter are furnished with organs of sensation, and instruments of activity, enabling them to remove from place to place, and make their uses of things lying within their reach. Nor do they less display a richness of invention in the variety of their forms among birds, beasts, fishes, and insects, fitted for flying, or walking, or creeping, or clinging, or mining, or swimming, covered with feathers, or wool, or hair, or shells, or scales, armed with horns, or tusks, or claws, or stings: some living in communities sociable as man, others working with a sagacity unknown to him, others again without either strength, or cunning, subsisting merely by their multitudes.

Nor can we help remarking those surprising instincts that severally guide them to their harbours, their foods, their ways of breeding and preservation, instruct them to build their nests, to make their combs, to spin their webs, and provide for the future, without knowledge of their wants. And when we reflect that many animals can find their commodious habitation only in one particular kind of plant, which they do not fail to find ready for them at their proper season, as if the vegetable kingdom were in league to support the animal, we shall be persuaded that both were comprehended within the same design, suiting the qualities of the one to the occasions of the other.

6. Thus far we have considered things in separate lights, as useful to human life, or as artificial in their production or structure: if we proceed to contemplate such as may stand in both lights, wherein the use and the contrivance are equally obvious, we shall still find an ample field to range in. For we may observe by what an admirable train of preparations the vegetable kind perfects plenty of materials for our occasions: corn and pulse and fruits for our sustenance, flax and cotton for our clothing, roots, and leaves, and woods, for our manufactures and entertainment, oils, liquors, gums, and drugs for our uses and amusements, even reeds and rushes for some little purposes we can turn them to.

How many animals are wonderfully formed and furnished in various

ways, for supplying our wants and gratifying our desires! Cattle, fowl, and fish for our nourishment, the viper, the snail, the cantharides for our health, the horse and the ox endued with strength and docility for our services: their parts and even excrescences adapted to our uses, as well as those of the creatures that bore them; oil, tallow, glue, cochineal, ivory, horn, hair, wool, the nice texture of quills and feathers, the curious net-work of hides, capable of being rendered durable to preserve our records against the injuries of time, or softened into a covering for our tender flesh, or worked almost as close and compact as wood: their instincts severally disposing them to contribute towards our benefit and pleasure. The fearless mastiff guards our houses; the faithful sheep-dog assists in tending our flocks; the sagacious hound and busy spaniel supply what we want by the dulness of our senses; the watchful cat, the digging rook, and the insidious spider, help to clear us from vermin; the solitary silk-worm imprisons herself in her cell to lay the ground-work of our manufactures; the little fly sits boring the oak-leaf to brew ink for our correspondence; the indefatigable bee labours with inimitable art to furnish wax and honey for our entertainment; the winged choristers gladden our hearts with their music, delight our eyes with their variegated plumage, please our curiosity with the nice architecture of their nests, and skilful vigilance in tending their young, and multiply the joys of spring.

Then what a world of wonders necessary for our uses does this microcosm, the human body, contain! what multitude of vessels, glands, and ducts, to concoct and distribute our aliment! what artificial structure and excellent disposition of muscles and joints to serve for instruments of action! what amazing nicety in the organs of sense? the eye with her humours and tunicles mathematically placed and proportioned among one another; the ear in winding mazes modulating the vibrations of air into sounds; the nerves in imperceptible threads running everywhere through the fleshy parts, yet returning their notices without impediment from the furthest extremities of our limbs. And all this complicated machinery containing an infinitude of multiform works, bound up in one little compass, yet with such stupendous skill as that they do not interfere with one another's operations, nor fall into disorder upon our motions.

I do not know whether I may go on to instance in that part of our constitution enabling us to make improvement in knowledge, acquisitions of habit, dexterity, and accomplishment; because these are currently supposed to reside in the mind itself, distinguished from everything material. If any man can satisfy himself that a perceptive Being may contain knowledge it does not perceive, as we certainly do not, and cannot with all our industry, call to mind the thousandth part of all the knowledge we possess, or have habitual sentiments wherewith it is not continually affected, I shall not argue the point with him. For my part I cannot conceive, how an improvement of knowledge or alteration of character can be effected without a change of modification, or new arrangement of parts, which cannot take place in a simple spirit uncompounded of parts: therefore I must attribute them to a mental organization, composed of fine material substance, striking perceptions momentarily upon the mind, in the manner of external objects.

And how exquisitely must this composition be framed to give us that infinite and yet regular variety of play we experience! Let any man take an English dictionary, and reflect that he knows the meaning of almost every word in that thick volume, that they present him with new ideas according as they are compounded in different styles, solemn, familiar,

logical, rhetorical, poetical, and humorous: let him consider how many transactions, faces, and places he can remember, how many affections and sentiments he possesses, how many points of common knowledge he is expert in, how many ways of acting he has experience of, each whereof rise readily to his view as the occasion happens to introduce them, or as he pleases to call them up for his use or amusement, following the regular trains without confusion, or interfering with one another: let him consider what a multitude of works must be requisite for these purposes, and what consummate skill to range them all in proper order, within a place smaller perhaps than can be imagined, and he will be ready to acknowledge that our mental organization is still more admirable than the system of our grosser machinery.

7. Between the provinces of nature and chance, there lies a tract claimed by both, or shared in common between them: I mean the proportions and situations of bodies with respect to one another, and the motions among them usually called the order of nature; which she preserves by her necessary agency, but was first put into it by causes unknown, and accidental to us. For though the Moon be holden in her course by the two known laws of perseverance in a rectilinear motion, and external attraction, yet we know no laws of nature that should place her precisely in the orbit where she rolls, nor give her just the tangential impulse requisite to retain her in it.

Within this intercommoned tract we may reckon the distances of the planets primary and secondary, from their respective centres, their solidities, magnitudes, and phases, their centripetal and centrifugal forces, so nearly balancing as to keep them in almost circular paths: the eccentric orbits of comets, whose plains cross those of the others at very large angles, so as never to disturb their regularity by a too near attraction. The diurnal rotation of our globe giving us the vicissitudes of night and day; the oblique position of its axis ever parallel to itself, that winter and summer, seed-time and harvest, may never fail; the disposition of its surface into mountains, plains, and valleys, islands, seas, bays, and harbours: the distribution of rivers, the diversity of soils for the accommodation of human life, the burning sands, the frozen zones, the subterraneous exhalations whereon depend the variations of wind and weather, many times so necessary to be attended to, yet proceeding upon rules which no human ingenuity can reduce into a science. The just admeasurement of the elements, that water may not abound to overwhelm us, nor air fall deficient, nor earth swell to a greater mass than could be duly moistened, nor fire pass its proper boundaries: that universal element which carries on an intercourse between all parts of the world, beaming in kindly warmth from the distant Sun, and travelling immeasurable journeys from the remotest constellations. The generation of metals in such suitable quantities as that gold and silver are not too plentiful to serve us for money, nor iron and copper too scarce to furnish the artificer with instruments and the housekeeper with utensils. The appropriation of plants, and fruits, and animals, and other commodities to particular countries; whereby commerce is rendered necessary, and an acquaintance introduced among the several nations upon earth.

Nor must we omit the uses and qualities assigned to animals, wherein we can turn them most commodiously to our advantage: we have not our wool to seek from the dangerous lion, nor want the untameable tiger to plough our grounds; but the ox, the horse, and the sheep have docility and manageableness given them for their characteristic. Creatures saleable in the

fair or market are made much more prolific than those of the savage kind. Poultry and rabbits keep within their accustomed purlieus; but nobody knows where to find the coarse-grained heron, or the worthless cuckoo. The family of bees abide patiently in the habitation we please to assign them, but the libertine ant will choose her own settlement from which she is hardly to be expelled; obsequiousness and different kinds of sagacity are joined in the several tribes of dogs: credulity brings the wild duck into our decoys, and the greediness of swine makes the very offal of our houses valuable. If we consider lastly the reigning animal Man, who subsists by society, and receives his protection, his necessaries, and accommodations, from the united labours of many persons diversely qualified, we shall see how their constitutions and talents are prudently distributed among them: so that hands are not wanted for every office of life, whether active or sedentary, venturesome or cautious, robust, or delicate; how the sexes are equally proportioned, how the natural temper of some persons sets examples of virtue to others, and even their vices are so counterpoised as to check and correct one another.

8. Having traversed the confines lying under an intermingled jurisdiction, we may enter the province peculiar to chance or fortune, containing the multitude of events extraordinary, unaccountable, or produced by the concurrence of undiscoverable causes: which we may distribute into three classes, as they affect the human race, or particular kingdoms, or single persons. Under the first we may rank those lucky hits which have given rise to arts, manufactures, and sciences: printing and gunpowder were effects of mere curiosity and accident: the Pergamenians were put upon making parchment by being denied the importation of paper from Egypt: Pythagoras is recorded to have learned the rudiments of music from a smith's anvil: and it is said the first sugar-baker was a pigeon, who, flying from a house-top with some dust of the mortar sticking to his feet perched upon melted molasses, the heat drove him off again in an instant, but the liquor in that part where he had lit, was found clarified just in the shape of his claw. But without building upon legendary tales, a little observation may show us how a particular turn of genius and situation in life leads men into useful inventions, and favourable circumstances concur to give them encouragement.

How many profitable discoveries in chymistry have taken birth from that whimsical notion of finding the philosopher's stone? For how many ages did men know the magnetic virtues of the load-stone, without observing it gave a polarity to the needle? With what obstinacy did Columbus pursue a project appearing chimerical, till he opened a passage to the new world? from what small beginnings have religions and sects in philosophy been spread wide by persons of singular characters appearing in critical seasons? What a series of uncommon circumstances, both with respect to internal polity, and the condition of foreign nations, contributed to lay the foundation of the Macedonian and Roman greatness, and extend it over half the globe? And in remote consequence of these inventions and incidents, mankind is become better cemented and civilized; though the earth be fuller peopled, the nations of it are fewer, every country has some intercourse with others, and the more barbarous gradually take a tincture from the more humane; so that the Turks can now depose without murdering, and discharge their ministers by other methods than the bow-string; the wild Tartars are brought into some degree of subjection, and the roving Arabs kept a little in subordination under their better policied neighbours.

9. To the second class we may refer the springs working in the rise, the growth, or the decay of kingdoms. Imbecility of counsels, corruption of manners, or jealousies among the great, have broken empires to pieces; and extraordinary persons or remarkable incidents have generated new monarchies or commonwealths out of their ruins. Intrepidity, policy, wisdom, and sometimes enthusiasm, popularity, or desperation of one man, has laid the foundation of a state, or caused a total revolution, enslaved or restored it to liberty, advanced it to riches and strength, or thrown all things into confusion; nor are precedents wanting of this confusion instructing those who suffer by it, how to settle things again upon a more solid establishment.

Little colonies from Egypt and Asia have grown into the flourishing republics of Greece: the overflowings of northern adventurers erected and cantoned their military governments, which by various successes and changes of constitution have been modelled into their present form. Commerce has migrated from the Phœnicians to the Venetians, from them to the Dutch, and now extends its influence over all the people of Europe, but shedding the largest portion upon our own country. Learning and accomplishment have had their vicissitudes of darkness and splendour, reason and superstition have pursued each other over most quarters of the globe. Wealth, strength, and prosperity have travelled three successive ages through Spain, France, and Britain, making the two former, in their turns, the terror, and the last the protection of their weaker neighbours, with the better prospect of continuing so, by how much the balance of power and preservation of liberty are a more durable basis of greatness, than pursuit of universal monarchy.

Nor do we want striking objects of reflection in the annals of our own history; where we may see how the crown, the church, and the barons struggling which should have the tyrannizing over the people, frustrated each other's aims: until one king by a stretch of law broke the nobles' power, and another by overawing the legislature compelled them to disarm the hierarchy. How opportunely the shortness of Mary's, and length of Elizabeth's reign, delivered us from the greatest domestic and foreign dangers. How the total neglect of true policy, the wrong-grounded piety and obstinacy, the selfishness and greedy extravagance, the furious bigotry of succeeding counsels, opened the way to our present happy situation by the most unpromising paths.

But upon this article we must repeat what has been noted before, that the same events are providential, or not, to different persons, according to the opinion they entertain of their being desirable or mischievous: for what does not appear conducing to some end, apprehended good, will not easily be admitted as evidence of a superintending care. Therefore the Papist sees nothing further than chance in the many circumstances concurring to the reformation, nor the believer in divine hereditary right, in all that contributed to turn aside the linear succession; or at most they refer these things to the secret counsels of Heaven, which must ever remain unfathomable by human understanding. But there is no occasion to urge exceptionable evidences, since there is such plenty that every man may find enough in incidents that have brought on an issue he will acknowledge fortunate and profitable.

10. We proceed lastly to the third class of events, those affecting single persons. And as the dispensations of fortune are more commonly taken for providential, than the establishments of nature, because more remarkable, extraordinary, and less involving us in a long chain of prior causes:

so whatever affects a man's private interests, touches him stronger than those of the community, or mankind in general. For we are all of the utmost importance to ourselves, and think everything conducing to our benefit well worthy regard; concerning ourselves little with other things, any further than as we expect to be sharers in their consequences. Therefore let every man bestow a little pains in reflecting on the circumstances of his own situation, and the various accidents that placed him in it.

If he does not know what brought his parents together, or their parents and ancestors, or fixed them in one particular quarter, or profession, or course of life; yet he may be assured all these things depended upon a thousand chances, each of which happening otherwise he would not have been what he is at present, but might have been born at another time, in another country, or of another family, or wanted those conveniences and advantages of life he now possesses. If he cannot tell what causes operate in forming and fashioning the child before birth, yet there must have been a particular disposition of them to determine his constitution, his talents, and his natural temperament, in the manner he finds them: for he may have learned that half the children die before seven years old; that many come into the world maimed, weakly, and unhealthful, and I suppose will allow readily enough, there are multitudes whose mental endowments fall short of his own. Let him then contemplate the hazards of infancy he has run through, the advantages of converse and experience afforded, and favourable occurrences befalling him in life: how many dangers he has escaped, how many disappointments he has avoided, and how many follies he has committed without drawing on the consequences naturally expectant upon them.

These considerations would be more frequently attended to and have greater efficacy upon the minds of men, if it were not for the common humour of picking out cross accidents to ruminate upon: though a hundred things happen right, yet one that falls out amiss shall dwell upon their thoughts to the utter obliteration of all the rest, which makes them discontented and murmuring. Whereas if they would proceed impartially, and collect all that has befallen in their favour, and the circumstances surrounding them which it would hurt them to be deprived of, they would find them infinitely outnumbering their contraries. What though the season be gloomy, we have seen many fair seasons before, and there are hopes of the like returning again; nor are we destitute of allieviations towards supporting us under the present. In short, no man's condition is so miserable, but he owes something to fortune, for supplying comforts to mitigate, or helps to prevent it from growing worse. What though we see things fall out better with other people, shall we be so unreasonable as to turn their successes into our wants, and not rather keep our eye upon that variety of chances that have contributed something to our benefit?

Would men but use themselves for a while to consider from what concurrence of causes they derive their health, their strength, their abilities of body and mind, their conveniences, and enjoyments of life, and observe fairly and carefully the course of events, so far as affecting themselves; they would find so many remarkable things among them, and discern such marks of disposition and design in the ordering of them, as to be persuaded, there is a care had of their own interests, to rejoice in the discovery, and contentedly place their dependence upon that for their future provision.

But there are two cautions necessary to be taken by such as let their

thoughts run frequently in this train. One that they do not fancy themselves the peculiar objects of attention, engrossing it all in preference to the common herd: which would engender spiritual pride, and the most pernicious kind of self-conceit, because hardest to be cured. For there is no man but might experience the like particular care, if he would make the like reflection: and if he sees it plainer in his own case than his neighbour's, it is not because there is more bestowed upon him, but because he is better acquainted with his own history, and all the turns and incidents belonging to it, the effects whereof he feels upon himself, but only sees in the gross, and at a distance, upon others. Nor is it owing to his own greater importance, that a constant attention is paid to his interests, but to that fulness of power and richness of design which could adjust the concerns of all creatures, so that each should receive the entire share of good fortune intended him, without prejudice of the rest.

The other caution we recommend is, to be very backward in ascribing extraordinary events to an immediate operation of the agent producing them: for this would lead in the high road to superstition and enthusiasm, which, by an injudicious zeal to magnify his power, do an injury to his wisdom, and destroy the very essence of Providence; which consists not in doing things by dint of force and authority, but by so contriving the order of second causes, as that they shall bring forth the projected purposes of themselves, and the longer or more complicated length they run, so much the more admirable is the disposition.

Thus I have attempted to point out the topics, from whence any one may draw evidences of a superintending providence throughout the regions of nature, or mazes of fortune: had I been able to have displayed the whole scene at large in all its colours, it might not have produced a better effect; for what a man gathers for himself, is worth a million suggested by another: they may perhaps make him put on a solemn countenance, or vent a momentary ejaculation, but will hardly sink deep into his mind and memory. Therefore let each man select such of the before-mentioned heads for his contemplation, as he finds he can expatiate upon most readily, for they will strike the strongest impression. By competent practice in this method he will become gradually more expert in pursuing it, extend his observation to new spots in the prospect, and daily discover fresh lights in objects that had afforded him none before: until he attain a full conviction and intimate persuasion of a providence, as well particular as general, by a kind of sensible evidence needing no long argumentation nor curious disquisition to enforce or explain it.

11. But lest the rovings of his own imagination or sophisms of others should interrupt his progress, I shall endeavour to prepare for removing such obstacles as they may possibly throw in his way. It may be said, we see the courses both of nature and fortune, so far as the sagacity of man can investigate them, proceed from adequate causes, whence we have reason to conclude that all the rest proceed from the like: that in all the discoveries of causes we are able to make, many whereof run in a chain to very great lengths, we never find anything of intelligence or design among them, but they always act necessarily, according to their qualities and the concurrence of them, without choice, or purpose of what they tend to complete. Why this we very readily allow, but this heightens our idea of the contrivance that could adapt causes acting blindly in a long series of operations, so as to bring things into the same admirable order, as if they had been placed by an intelligent hand.

Who does not see there is a great deal of art and contrivance in a common watch? not that he thinks of any skill or understanding in the works themselves, combining to point out the hour and the minute, as well knowing that all their movements follow necessarily upon their shapes, and their contexture among one another: but he believes they must have been so formed and put together by some skilful artist. Well, but suppose him carried down into a mine, where he finds an engine that collects the metallic particles from their ores, works them up into springs and wheels, and dial plates, and hands, and disposes them artfully together so as to form a perfect watch, all by mechanical operation: he would now alter his opinion and stand convinced that watches might be made without hands, by a blind mechanism proceeding without thought, or contrivance of the works it performed. Yet though he lost his idea of ingenuity being requisite for making watches, upon seeing them generated by mechanical causes, and motions concurring to produce them: he would be satisfied a much greater must have been employed in constructing the engine, than he had judged needful while he believed them worked by hand, with hammers, files, pincers, and other instruments of the trade.

No doubt it will be objected here that this is a romantic supposition, for nobody ever saw an engine that will make watches: when we do, it will be time enough to seek for the artist capable of contriving so wonderful a machine. It is true, nobody ever yet saw such an engine, nor I believe ever will; for it would require much greater skill to contrive, than the sons of men are masters of: nevertheless, we have all seen engines that have brought works to perfection more curious and admirable. Examine a fruit or a seed, and you will find it nicely wrapped up in several integuments, furnished with fibres and juices ranged in their exact order, provided with springs capable of expanding into stem, branches, and leaves, of one particular form and contexture. The plant that bears it may be considered as an engine fitted with roots to gather nutritious particles from the earth, sap-vessels to concoct and circulate the juices, twigs that work them first into a bud, then a flower, then a knot for perfecting this surprising machine.

Consider the body of a fowl, what an abundance of works it contains, adapted for carrying on the business of digestion, circulation, sensation, and animal motion, in greater art and variety than any clock-work that ever yet was made by human contrivance. What then is an egg, but an engine constructed to fashion all these complicated works, and marshal them in their proper order? or what else is the matrix of the parent bird, besides another engine contrived for making eggs?

Then if we reflect that neither plant nor animal can subsist or grow without nourishment, moisture, air, and warmth, adapted variously both in quality and degree to the particular uses of the several species; that all matter being homogeneous, the qualities of bodies, small as well as great, must depend upon the structure and arrangement of their constituent parts: we must acknowledge that the elements, together with whatever nutritive or useful arises in endless variety from their commixtures, are so many little machines curiously contrived to perform their respective offices. So that the whole system of nature within these sublunary regions, commonly called the world, will appear as one stupendous engine, containing, besides the works appropriated to the generation of organized compositions, an infinite multitude of others, properly fitted, and dispersed in convenient places,

where they lie ready to assist in carrying on the play of vegetative and vital clock-works.

12. Now to change the scene from mechanical to moral agents: whoever can contrive salutary rules for the good government of a community and encouragement of arts, sciences, and manufactures, is justly esteemed an excellent politician, nor could he do without an uncommon compass of knowledge and depth of penetration. But to distribute talents, abilities, and characters, among an unsociable and savage multitude, in such manner as shall lead them gradually to strike out order and agreement, commerce and science, for themselves, requires a greater skill than human sagacity can arrive at.

If it be said, the steps a people take in growing civilized, are determined by their bodily temperament, their diet, their ways of living, the form and produce of their country, the conduct of their neighbours, and occurrences befalling among themselves, occasioned by natural causes; and thus the courses of the moral world follow those of the natural: this will bring us back to our great engine again, which we find so wonderfully constructed as not only to produce powers of action, but to determine the harmony of their operations; not only to form pipes to their perfect tone, but as I may say, to ascertain the particular tunes and concerts and variations that shall be played among them. And this immense machine, stored with such an inconceivable multiplicity of complicated works, must appear to every unprejudiced eye to have been the performance of some wise and excellent artist: for we have shown in a former place that it had a beginning, as bearing evident marks that it could not have stood forever in the same form and condition we see it at present.

Now if any one shall insist it arose spontaneously out of a Chaos, whose particles lay in such positions, and had such motions among them, as must necessarily produce a regular world, without any intelligent hand to fashion it; I do not know how he will make out his assertion by probable, or even plausible, conjecture, to our apprehension. However, it is not worth the while to contest the point, for supposing it proved, there will need a more consummate wisdom and extensive intelligence, to give the motions and positions to matter from whence so admirable a system must necessarily result, than if it had been ranged therein by an immediate operation. For every fresh discovery of natural causes only suspends our opinion of an operator for the present, or rather removes it from the effect to the cause: and the farther steps we can take in tracing them, still increase the necessity of a discernment capable of pursuing its purposes surely, through so many successive stages and intricate channels.

Therefore for my part, I should not care if the succession of natural causes could be proved eternal, and that as corn grows from the ground, and the grain of it passing through the bodies of animals, and the straw being trodden under foot in the farm-yard, becomes manure, which grows into fresh corn again some following year; so the worlds were generated by the action of pre-existent principles, and upon dissolution become resolved into their principles again, which would produce new worlds out of their materials in succeeding ages. For this would make the whole material universe but one still more stupendous engine, of a contrivance beyond all bounds of imagination, constructed by a power, whose existence and wisdom had no beginning, and therefore might well have operated from everlasting; nor can a time be limited when it must have first begun to work.

But this is a length of speculation I believe very rarely attempted to be

run; and perhaps were as well let alone, having no solid ground to run upon. The more judicious will be contented to find a stop in their investigations, nor is there hurt in pursuing them, so far as they can do it with clearness upon the fund of experience and observation, and the sober reasonings to be deduced therefrom: but in so doing, as was observed before, they will find the necessity of a contriving wisdom grow upon them the further they go. Men's insight into natural causes will be different in proportion to the strength of their vision, and opportunities of discernment; but they can never find any that was not itself an effect of some prior cause, or does not carry marks of a design and contrivance, suiting it to the productions it brings forth. Therefore wherever each person's line of discovery ends, there of course he will place the disposing hand; nor need he think amiss of the length or shortness of other people's lines, since they all terminate upon the same object: only the vulgar thinks it standing nearer to him than it really does, whereas the more penetrating, who plainly discerns it is not there, does but remove it a few paces further; for to this original, sooner or later, they both must have recourse.

13. It may be alleged in the second place, that the case is different between the works of nature and art; we know the latter must have been conducted with design and contrivance, because we have seen them frequently completed by men, who, we know, could not proceed without, and the experience of what has been done within our knowledge teaches us to discern the marks of art, as we know the faces of our acquaintance by having been familiar among them. For a savage, who had no artificers of any kind in his country, might perhaps be persuaded that watches grew from trees, as well as oranges and cocoa-nuts. Thus we get our idea of art from our experience of the performances we have seen achieved by it. But we have not the like experience in the productions of nature, for we never saw an operator at work upon them, in whom we might perceive whether he proceeded with thought, and judgment in the methods taken for bringing them forth.

Why then should we presume contrivance necessary, without warrant from experience of anything similar produced the like way? especially since we infer that industry has been employed, only upon finding things out of their natural order. When we see trees grow in equidistant spots and rows, or water run along in trenches through higher grounds, we conclude it must have been the work of men; because the trees could not have sprouted up, nor the water worn a channel for itself, in that manner. Therefore art being constantly distinguished by the alteration made in works of natural causes, should seem an evidence that there is none of it in them; because we could not discover what is artificial, so readily as we do upon inspection, if it had not a peculiar characteristic wanting in everything natural.

To this I shall reply, that there are different arts proceeding severally upon principles and rules of their own, and therefore have a sufficient characteristic to distinguish them from others. When we find seams in a cloth, we know there has been art used upon it after it came from the loom, which does not prove there was none employed in the weaving, but only that the arts of the sempstress and the tailor were different from that of the weaver: for there would be more skill requisite to make a shirt or a coat in one piece, so as exactly to fit the wearer, than to make the cloth first, and work it up to his measure afterwards. Our manufactures for the most part pass through many hands, each artist preparing materials for the next to exercise his industry upon: but the marks of art appearing in the performance

of the latter derogate nothing from the skill exhibited in those of the former; so neither does the contrivance distinguishable in them all destroy the evidence of it in those original materials the first operator fetches directly from the shop of nature; which contain a greater variety of parts, a nicer structure and accuracy of disposition, than any composition that can afterwards be framed out of them.

Nor do there want characteristics sufficient to distinguish the works of human industry from the productions of nature, without supposing the marks of contrivance appropriated to one of them alone: for the former are more clumsily put together, composed of grosser materials, with awkward joinings by seams, tenons, nails, and glues, betraying the imperfections of their workman to the eye; and not like the latter, interwoven with fine threads running imperceptibly among the parts, so that you cannot see what holds them together, nor where one begins and another ends. If we admire the contrivances of art, it is either comparatively with the ordinary performances of art, which afford us the pleasure of novelty, or because they add some improvement to what has been done by nature, though the additions be not worked with so masterly a hand as the foundation they advanced upon.

A tree so well imitated in wax-work, with branches, leaves, blossoms, and fruit, as that the beholder shall be ready to take it for a real one, strikes the eye with admiration, because surpassing whatever we have seen before of the kind, and bespeaks a nicety and dexterity of execution in the maker: but examine the parts and internal structure, and you will find it nothing comparable to the original, which yet we take little notice of, because it is so common, growing out of the ground, without any trouble of ours to form it. We think the elegancies of a garden far beyond the rude confusion of a wilderness, overrun with briers and weeds; but the gardener, were he capable of making the trees, the flowers, and the turf he employs, would find much more thought and contrivance requisite for the task, than he did in the proper disposition of them among his walks and plantations. Thus, in the finest performances of human industry, man only gives the finishing stroke, contributing little from his own fund to the exquisiteness of the work, in comparison of what he draws from elsewhere.

Another difference between the two kinds of productions is this, that man performs his works by an immediate operation, and though he may run some of them considerable lengths, yet he must use his vigilance, and set to his helping hand from time to time, in the several steps of their progress. After he has picked the flax, he must take further pains to spin the thread, to weave the cloth, to cut out and make up the garment, and, lastly, to apply it to his uses: he may, indeed, contrive machines that shall go a little way in performing his works, for he can make corn-mills and throwing-mills, that grind the corn he must else have pounded in a mortar, or throw the silk he used to wind off with his fingers; but then they require correcting, repairing, and continual tendency, to set, to supply them, to take away what is finished, and to assist them in those parts of the work they are not capable of performing alone. Nor can he, like nature, construct engines that shall construct one another in numberless successions, each completing its task without manual operation to assist it; nor form such tools as the elements, that shall work spontaneously without a hand to employ them.

14. We commonly distinguish the works of human production from those of nature, as we do the hand-writing of one person from another's, not by the neatness but peculiar turn of the strokes: for though the writing be fine,

it is rather from the cut, than barely the elegance of the letter, that we know from whose pen it came. By long and daily acquaintance among natural causes, we learn the manner in which they act, and upon seeing things formed after a different manner, we conclude the hand of man must have interfered. If we employ the terms artificial and designed, in contradistinction to natural and mechanical, it is because custom has appropriated them to the performances of man, who we know by experience cannot act without some purpose and understanding, therefore they mean no more than something done by his skill or labour: yet this does not hinder but there may be design and contrivance in other productions, nor is it any better than a negative proof, that is, none at all, that we have no experience of an operator ever seen working upon them.

Though experience be the ground-work of our knowledge, it bears an inconsiderable proportion to the building erected thereupon: as a foundation makes but a small part of the house, and indeed is of none other use to the family than for supporting the offices and chambers above. Had we no further supplies beyond what were received directly from experience, he that had the best memory would be the cleverest and most accomplished man, because he would retain more than another that had a worse: but everbody knows, that judgment and understanding are different qualities from memory, though they can make no progress without it. We see things continually change their forms, new productions appearing, and old ones falling to decay, and we know those fluctuations must be made by certain powers, or causes, operating them: and these causes, however numerous, we commonly range for convenience sake, under three classes, nature, chance, and voluntary operation, each having its peculiar characteristic distinguishing it from the others.

Nature proceeds by necessity in a constant and steady regularity; volition with apprehension and design of some purpose to be completed: but the very essence of chance consists in undesignedness, and deviation from rule. As for the natural properties of bodies, they depend upon their structure, invisible organizations, or upon the modifications of their imperceptible particles: nor will these alone suffice to give them their activity, but serve only to turn or disperse the force of some other spring upon the subjects they affect. For nothing is more unanimously agreed among those who have looked most narrowly into the nature of bodies, than that they do not act originally from themselves, but only transmit an action received by impulse from one another. So that plants vegetate, animal circulations go on, lead presses downwards, steel recoils, fire dissipates, lightning rends, salts, acids, drugs, menstruums exert their vigour, by virtue of a force thrown into them from elsewhere. Nobody can tell from what channel to derive this mighty force: one may conjecture an ether repelling, or innumerable streams of still more subtile matter continually pervading them, and rushing with violence in all directions, but whether we can find it or no, there must be an inexhaustible fund of activity somewhere, to work all those surprising effects we see produced around us. And if we could clearly discover the ether, or the rushing torrent, still we should want another source to supply them with the force we know is not their own, since they are but fluid bodies, conveying an impulse first imparted to them, and having none other motions than those they had taken from something else before.

If we turn our thoughts next to voluntary agency, we shall find it by examples of what we do ourselves, proceeding in another manner; not with a force transmitted from anything external, but exerted originally by a power

of our own: motives may recommend, but the action begins in the agent himself. For if you request a friend to do something, how much soever you may be esteemed the cause of what is done, you convey no efficacy to him for the doing it: for he could have done it without your asking, but bodies could not perform their offices without the secret springs that set them at work.

Let us now consider the third class of causes, those ascribed to chance, and we shall find they can have had no beginning in themselves, but follow upon the operation of the other two: for either natural or voluntary causes must be at work, before there can be any chance what event they shall produce. Though we act always with apprehension of some purpose to be attained, yet other consequences oftentimes ensue than those we apprehended, and this opens the door to chance. A man shoots at a rat in his yard, and kills a chicken which he did not intend, therefore we call this accidental: but he must have shot, or no accident at all could have ensued. Or he throws with a pair of dice, and we say it is chance what cast will come up: perhaps that comes up he wishes, but he cannot be said to have designed it, for design implies a knowledge, real or imaginary, of the measures proper to compass it, which he has not: yet he must throw, or there can be no cast at all, for chance has no power to do anything without him.

But chance takes place likewise in events wherewith human agency has nothing to do: yet there must be natural causes in motion, before anything can fall out accidentally among them; it is only our uncertainty of their concurrence and powers, that gives chance a title to the production. When a man plants a hazel he does not think it accidental that he should gather nuts therefrom, and not strawberries: but if he receives a foreign plant he has never seen before, nor had any account of, he may reckon it a chance whether it shall bear nuts, or pulpy fruit, whether white, or red, or yellow blossoms. We do not apprehend it in the power of chance to make the sun shine at midnight, because the times of his rising depend upon the known courses of nature: but nothing is esteemed more casual than the weather, yet rain, and storms, and thunders, and serene airs proceed from natural causes, which must have their certain effect according to their respective qualities and proportions, and if we knew them exactly, we might calculate the variations of weather, as well as changes of the moon.

15. Thus among all the operations falling under our notice, there is but one source we know of, from whence they could originally derive: volition being the only power capable of beginning action or giving an impulse it did not first receive. For nature is nothing more than a conveyance, whose channels in some measure we can trace, conducting activity from one substance to another: and chance grows like an excrescence from the situation, the circumstances attending, or mutual concurrence of other causes. Therefore when we ascribe the beginning of action to a voluntary agent, we are so far from contradicting or departing from experience, that we build entirely upon that bottom, because we have no experience of anything besides, that can act otherwise than by transmitting an operation already begun. And whoever supposes a substance involuntarily self-moving, or causing a new impulse not in being before, builds upon mere hypothesis, without any fact within the compass of his observation to support it. Whereas he that holds the contrary, does it because experience of his own actions teaches him that he begins them himself, but that everything acting involuntarily proceeds in another manner, only carrying on an operation begun by some other agent.

But of the works we effect ourselves, some are intentional, others undesigned; among those we produce with design, some are done easily and carelessly, others with art, contrivance, labour, and study, in different degrees of greater or less: and we judge of those degrees upon examination of the performance, where the hand is unknown, by the fineness of the parts, manner of the disposition, stages of the operation, and length of the measures necessary to be thought on for completing it. Why then may not we apply this rule founded on experience to the productions of nature? which being found exquisite in their workmanship, admirable in their disposition, and perfected through a long series of operations preparing for one another, may warrant us to judge from these marks, how consummate and boundless must be the wisdom of their author.

Nor yet can we infer that his works must be operose, because we are conscious of our own being so, for we know by experience that in proportion to the progress a man has made in his art or science, he acquires a greater expertness, and takes in more comprehensive views at a glance, which facilitate his work, and enable him to lay his schemes the more readily. There is no labour in volition nor intelligence of objects clearly apprehended; labour and weariness reside in the limbs, or corporeal instruments we employ as well in meditation as in action; difficulty and trouble spring from the investigation of knowledge we have not, or the obstructions met with in tracing out a plan not yet lying complete before us. But that power which was the beginning of all action, could have no acquisition of knowledge to make, because there was nothing external to furnish him with the lights; nor ever rectify his plan, because there is nothing besides his own works to suggest an amendment. Nevertheless, the consciousness of our own doing many things undesignedly and accidentally, may still leave a suspicion that chance has some share in what we see around us: but supposing this suspicion warrantable, we may know that nature was not of her production, by the regularity, and tendency to profitable purposes, apparent in it.

For chance works always at random, without rule or aim, and though she may now and then hit upon something regular or advantageous, it is very rarely, and then intermingled among a thousand wild and fruitless vagaries. Tully tells us, a hog has been known to make a perfect letter A with his snout upon the ground, but nobody ever saw, or thought it possible to see, the whole poem of Ennius scratched out in that manner; and I believe he might have added safely, that no man ever saw a single A written by a hog, without a multitude of other irregular scratches round about it. If we had left a number of letters upon a table written on bits of card, and returning after some time into the room, should find them lying upon the floor in such manner as to compose a grammatical sentence; we should certainly believe they had been placed by somebody, and not brushed off the table accidentally; what then should hinder, but that, upon finding the elements disposed into organized bodies, whether animal or vegetable, we may conclude the causes that brought them into that order were provided with intention they should produce this effect? But it is said the bits of card, however they came upon the ground, must have taken some position or other, and there was as much possibility they should take that of a sentence, as any other you can imagine: for suppose you have only four of them which you place in a line blindfold, and then find they spell the word HAND, it was but twenty-three to one against their so doing: and if they had stood in any other position, as DNHA, which makes no word at all,

there was the like chance of twenty-three to one against its so happening. Therefore we have no reason to admire any particular order we see things stand in, since at all events they must have taken some position, with respect to one another equally unlikely: for it is not the singularity of their position, which belongs alike to every one they could be cast into, but its resemblance with those positions man uses to range them in for serving his purposes, that makes us believe it his doing. For order is relative to our apprehensions; every number of things must lie in some certain situation with respect to one another, which will appear orderly to a person familiarly acquainted with it; but we term that order, which corresponds with those manners of arrangement it suits our convenience most frequently to observe.

Very well; admit all this to be as alleged; nevertheless that resemblance of the letters with the manner in which man ordinarily places them for his purposes, will be thought an invincible presumption by every one, of their being so placed by design; therefore why should not the same resemblance with the works of design, which we behold in the productions of nature, be deemed as invincible a presumption of their being formed with intention of yielding those benefits received from them by mankind, or answering those ends we see them attain? And even supposing, what cannot easily be supposed, that the component parts of them might have fallen into that order by chance, yet considering by what a long series of operations, and through how many complicated channels they were brought thither, it was millions of millions to one they had not; so that in every case the believer has all this advantage over the infidel, there being these immense odds, that he is in the right rather than the other.

Which odds, were there nothing surer to go upon, might satisfy any reasonable person; especially when he reflects, that we have not absolute certainty for our ground of proceeding in the common transactions of life. For how know we the properties of bodies unless by constant experience of their effects? we cannot penetrate into the imperceptible causes whereon they depend; but if these causes were brought together by chance, there is a possibility that the same chance may suddenly remove them, and substitute others of a contrary effect; so that in ascribing the order of nature to design, if we have not mathematical demonstration, we have at least as good assurance that the house will not fall upon our heads, that the wood we throw upon the fire will not burst like gunpowder, that the victuals we eat will not poison us; for we cannot mathematically demonstrate these things, yet are none of us uneasy, or disturbed at the want of it, but rest contented upon the basis of experience, and such knowledge of the powers and qualities of bodies, as we can gather therefrom.

16. But the third and most plausible objection against the wisdom of nature is drawn from the faults, imperfections, and trifling productions, alleged to be found abounding therein. How many diseases and misshapen forms do we see among plants and animals? how often does nature fail in midway, beginning but not perfecting her seeds and embryos? how many unavailing meteors, tossings of sand upon the shore and dust about in the air, that serve to no purpose? how many blights and damps, scorching heats and corrosive airs, waste and wear away her works? how many accidents happen to man, brought on by a concurrence of uncommon causes, but attended with no consequences either good, or bad? and how many others tending to his disappointment, trouble, and damage?

All these may seem not barely a negative evidence carrying no marks of design, but a positive, showing there was no design in their production: for it

may be urged that if the apparent tendency of measures to an end be the proof upon which we judge of there being an intelligence employed in contriving them, those which are wholly nugatory, tending to no end at all, or which frustrate the purposes pursued by other measures already taken, cannot have been conducted with design, as bearing an opposite character. When nature forms her plants in curious organizations proper for yielding their increase, we think ourselves assured, the end pursued thereby must be to produce seeds and fruits, either for propagating their species, or serving the uses of man: but when blights, or chills, or other causes render this purpose abortive, it will be said these cannot have proceeded from the same hand, or at least must have been accidental, unthought of, and extraneous to the plan. For it is inconsistent to imagine the same design can contain a long train of measures for perfecting a work, and others at the same time for defeating it.

But to make this objection valid, we must have another support to underprop it, to wit, that we know precisely the whole of the design, or at least that it must be similar to those of our own framing; which is a foundation we do not care to trust to in judging of one another's performances: for we are very frequently convinced a thing was done with design, where we cannot possibly guess what the design should be, nor find it answering any end that we should endeavour to compass ourselves. Nor is it a proof that measures have been taken in vain, because they fail of completing the purpose we expected to have seen answered by them unless we know all their tendencies, and can be well assured there was none other end whereto they were necessarily conducive so far as they have gone. Surely it is too hasty a judgment to pronounce all imperfect formations, and all interruptions or irregularities in the works of nature useless, when we many times find our own uses in them.

Our asparagus, our cauliflowers, and our garden stuff, are but half-formed productions, which when come to their natural perfection, are no longer fit for our tables: we find a place there for green gooseberries, and half-grown apricots, and do not relish our peas and beans when ripened to their full maturity. Bezoar, civet, and castor, are the diseases of animals: gums, oak-galls, and variegated leaves, the distempers of plants. Knee-timber, the distortion of nature, is more valuable than the straight: and double blossoms, which seem her errors as seldom yielding seed, are coveted by us in contempt of the single. We prune, and poll, and cut our trees into unnatural shapes: and make capons, wethers, and oxen by mutilation. As much as we despise the vile tribes of insects, there are some of them of consequence enough to claim our regard, as the cochineal, the bee, and the silkworm. The most trifling objects sometimes deserve our attention, or assist us in the discoveries of science: little accidents have an influence upon our affairs: even disappointments and troubles furnish a great part of our employment, and bear no inconsiderable share in forming the tempers, the virtues, and the characters.

Some commodities of natural growth, and many of our manufactures, seemed formed on purpose to be destroyed again, as coals, peat, candles, pastry, gunpowder, because their use lies solely in the consumption. Nor is it deemed an inconsistency in human understanding, to contrive engines for breaking to pieces the corn it has been industrious to cultivate, or to render it unfit either for seed or food in making starch, pastes, or powders, or to extract a small part of its virtue, spoiling all the rest in the brewery or distillery. Why then should we arraign nature of inconsistency for mak-

ing imperfect productions, or destroying those she has completed until we know what further compositions she may or may not form of their crudities and what distilleries she may raise from their corruption?

But we very confidently decide, that everthing must be nugatory which has not a visible tendency to the services of man: as if we knew all the channels by which our uses are conveyed to us, or that what does not advance them immediately could not do it remotely. Why must we needs pronounce the earthworm an unprofitable reptile, because we cannot eat his flesh, nor make gloves of his skin? perhaps he assists the ploughman to fructify the earth by turning it continually, or opens the mould among the fibrous roots of grass, where the spade could not reach without bruising them to pieces: so that we may be beholden to him in part for our daily bread, and owe him more thanks than anger for defiling the turf in our gardens. Why must it necessarily be a waste in nature that such multitudes of seeds and vegetables perish by weather or other accidents? how know we that their putrefaction is not a distillery from whence the air we breathe is supplied with that vivifying spirit whereby it sustains us? we may know by the fermentation and warmth arising from them when laid in heaps, that they contain an active spirit: and though upon holding our faces over them, we find it rather of a suffocating than enlivening quality, because taken in too great quantities, yet so we should brandy if poured down by pints, which nevertheless proves an excellent cordial properly administered.

The more narrowly men pry into the courses of nature, their mutual dependencies and effects upon one another, they daily discover new uses unknown or unthought of before, and that even in things vulgarly esteemed pernicious; from whence it is a reasonable presumption that there remain innumerable uses still behind, which never will and never can be discovered while we have no better faculties than those allotted us at present. But even admitting the total uselessness of some phenomena; this would not invalidate our argument with respect to those whose uses are manifest. We do not reason thus in regard to one another; if we see a man act undesignedly in some instances, we do not conclude he does so in others, where we can discern and approve his design. And it will be enough for all necessary purposes, if we satisfy ourselves there is a wisdom in the productions formed around us, though it should not extend to them all without exception. Nay, the vulgar, who seem to apprehend chance as having a joint share in the government of the world, find therein another subject for wisdom to work upon, in preventing or remedying the errors of chance, and making such ample provision for those formations which are liable to accident, that there may be enough both for use and for waste: an instance whereof we have in the rain, which is raised in such quantities, as though one half be lost in the sea, the other half suffices to water the land.

But, for my part, I see no reason to determine upon the absolute uselessness of any provision: if there be some which afford room to believe they do no benefit to man, and others from whence he reaps a trifling advantage not at all proportionable to the vastness of preparation, (of which there might be instances produced,) it seems a more probable conclusion, that they were made for other Beings, and that whatever is waste to us was expedient to them. For why should we persuade ourselves the boundless universe must contain no more inhabitants than those crawling about this little globe? or what else besides vulgar prejudice makes us think it impossible, that life, sense, and activity, can subsist without such gross organizations as render us visible to one another? And as we know there are

little animals which live by the destruction and putrefaction of larger bodies, so it is not improbable there may be other creatures who find their uses in the same materials that supply us with ours: but being of very different natures, receive their benefit from different compositions and modifications of them, which are wholly useless or pernicious to animals.

17. Having gotten over these objections, we must leave it to each man to apply the remedies to such particular ones as are apt to start up occasionally from events relating to himself. But a little calm reflection may quickly satisfy him that these temptations to murmur arise from a false idea of the design pursued by Providence, which he measures by his own selfish, narrow views. We run eagerly after pleasure, profit, or the prosecution of some present prevailing desire, and if things happen cross to our wishes, think ourselves neglected, or unfavourably dealt with; because we cannot conceive anything contrived wisely that does not help us forward in our career. Whereas Providence constantly aims at the general good, or the whole good of particulars, in preference to their temporary advantage or indulgence: we have innumerable sources of gratification afforded us, but the withholding such of them as would be attended with mischievous consequences is no less a kindness, though we do not see it. For we take in our prospect by halves; and not unfrequently complain of those very circumstances for obstructing our schemes, which promote them most effectually, or furnish us with the opportunities of laying them.

How grievous does it appear to the farmer when the rains or frosts prevent his sowing, or frequent showers double his charges, his labour, his care, his attendance, in a catching harvest! I shall not urge upon him the trite fable of Jupiter letting a farm with command of the weather, and the tenant ruining himself by that very privilege; because perhaps he will not believe but he could have managed it more wisely. I shall rather suggest to him a consideration more obvious to his own discernment, which is, that if the seasons were constantly favourable, and the crops certain, the business of agriculture would be so easy that gentlemen might manage their own lands by help of a bailiff: so there would be no farm to let for him to get his living by, nor could he expect to earn anything more than the wages of a common labourer.

And in all conditions of life, it is common for disappointment and difficulty to quicken the industry, whet the wits, and ripen the experience, by which we work out our advantages and pleasures; and for troubles passed through to give relish to subsequent enjoyments. But these good consequences will not appear at the time when we want their comfort most, without a proper disposition of mind inclining us to expect them; which being not attainable with a wish, requires our repeated endeavours to inure ourselves to it. By contemplation of things apparently providential, and diligent observation of events that terminate better than they promised, we may gain an habitual persuasion of a wisdom and goodness employed in conducting them: which will beget a reasonable presumption of the like having been exerted where we do not see the marks of them. As practice renders the faculties more acute, we shall find our prospect gradually enlarge, discovering footsteps of Providence in places where we saw nothing but chance and trifle before: until we form something of a system, and make an imperfect acquaintance with the ways in which wisdom uses to proceed.

But there is a caution to be taken with regard to the objects whereto we direct our observation: for if we suffer our zeal to run beyond our reason

we may chance to see the hand of Providence where it is not, and while we fancy ourselves following its traces, may wander into the wilds of superstition and enthusiasm, full stocked with dreams, omens, signs, prognostics, judgments, and other delusive phantoms. If any extraordinary significations be vouchsafed at any time, they come unthought, and manifest themselves instantaneously, like lightning, by their own strength and brightness: therefore it is in vain to think of reducing them into a science which can be built only upon the bottom of familiar experience. But it is in nature and the ordinary courses of events, that we are to seek for such of the divine counsels as are fit for us to know; for all the motions of nature lying in the hand of God, there is no doubt of his being able to manifest to us so much as he judges proper therein: this then is the book from whence we are to draw our science, and it behoves us to study the style and method of it carefully. The consciousness of our short-sightedness may teach us to expect many things unaccountable: but whatever is so, belongs not to us to descant upon, nor can we justly take anything for a sign or a judgment, without tracing a visible connection between causes and effects.

Nor will it suffice to consider barely the appearances of nature or train of events, without observing further what effect they have upon the moral world, and in what manner they severally contribute towards forming the tempers, the apprehensions, the desires, and sentiments, whereon our uses and enjoyments depend as much as upon things external. But if what has been offered in the former parts of this work should happen to gain credit, so as to make it appear probable that this life is a preparation for the next: not only as our good or evil conduct draws on its respective reward or punishment, but as our habits of thought and action operate upon the spiritual body we carry within us, and gradually work out the powers, the talents, the genius, suited to the functions we are destined to perform hereafter: this will open a new field of observation, wherein though we cannot tell precisely what are the particular uses of everything we see, yet we may gather from the variety of professions, conditions and ways of life, whereinto men are cast by nature, or led by accident, that there are further uses designed beyond those we discern, and that whatever appears unaccountable in our present dispensations has its reference to future consequences, in the regions lying out of our ken.

After competent practice in these exercises, we shall begin to look upon everything as providential, not indeed originally so as exhibiting marks of a design, but capable of being employed in it, and deriving their evidence of being so employed from the opinion we have already established upon the foundation of other evidences. And if we try to frame a theory of the particular steps whereby they promote their design, it may help to strengthen our opinion and can do no hurt, provided nothing be admitted inconsistent with the facts we experience. This idea of everthing providential, according to the strength of its impression, will infallibly beget a proportionable sense of our being continually under the care and direction of Providence, so that nothing happens to us in vain, but even trifling occurrences and sinister accidents terminate in some solid advantage, greater or less, near or remote. Nevertheless, in order to reap the full benefit of such a sense, which we shall miss of if we look for it in the wrong quarter, I must repeat what I have remarked before, that the advantage to be expected is not always the removal of our present distress, nor the procurement of anything we have now in our desires. Yet the

persuasion of distant good, to arise from what passes with us, is an alleviation of present uneasiness: or at least takes off that regret which doubles the pressure, and perhaps makes the whole weight. For it has been said of old that pain of itself is no evil, but takes its sting from reflection trouble and reflection certainly fix their seat there. When men look upon what befals them as an injury or cruelty, then it is they are hurt by what they feel: but if there be any pleasureable object ready whereon reflection can be turned, the evil will sit light; or at worst there will be gleams of comfort at every little interval between the attacks of pain: and we have no reason to despise the remedy that gives a partial relief, because it does not work a perfect cure.

18. But the cares of Providence, how universally soever extended, do not supersede the necessity of our own cares to avail ourselves of the opportunities put into our hands. What though the earth be stored with food of all kinds by the bounty of heaven, we must gather and prepare it for ourselves, or shall starve in the midst of plenty. What though a thousand curious engines be continually at work in the body to concoct, to secrete, and distribute the juices necessary for preserving the vigour of health: yet we must assist their play by temperance, and exercise, or sometimes by medicine, or the machine will quickly run into disorder. For our powers of action, and the sense given us to direct them, being among the provisions made for our benefit, by abusing them we may easily frustrate the effects of all the rest, therefore it behoves us to apply them so as may conduce most to our happiness, the proper goal whereto we are to steer.

Now there needs not much argument to persuade men they will be happy in the gratification of their desires so long as it may last with relish; nor can they fail of knowing by experience, that desire is not of so inflexible a nature but that it may be made to take a new ply, and brought to fasten upon different objects by care and industry. But Providence having the disposal of all events universally, its purposes can never be defeated: therefore so far as our desires coincide with them, they can never be crossed or disappointed: so the road to happiness is plain where we can discern what those purposes are, and surmount the difficulty of bending desire until it falls into the same line.

Our idea of Providence will lead us to conclude, it aims at the general good of the creation, or the whole good of individuals, and even their temporary accommodations and enjoyments whenever compatible with the other two: therefore this is the course it will be most expedient for us to put ourselves into. Our amusements and conveniences, and the ordinary pursuits of life, do not lead us out of our way, while we have nothing of greater moment to pursue: but these are to be regarded only as occasional employments to keep us in action, or underparts of our design to be taken up or laid aside with indifference; for our principal attention is due to securing the main chance, and making our service as extensive to our fellow-creatures as opportunity will permit.

This is properly our business and the perfection of our nature, for children are selfish and short-sighted, their views confined always to their own pleasures, or wants of the present moment: but as they grow up, their prospect opens, and their sensibility spreads, they can feel a pleasure in making advances towards distant good, and find a conscious complacence in the good offices they do to others. The difference between manly and childish lies in the importance of the design, with a disregard of humour, appetite, and indulgence, never suffering them to occupy our thoughts a

moment longer than we judge expedient. Nor can we be said to have arrived at the perfection of manhood, until whatever appears most profitable upon the whole becomes an object of real desire, so as to afford a present gratification in the steps taken to prosecute it: and makes us feel a sensible complacence in any dispensation of Providence we can conceive conducing to our own or the general benefit, though in the remotest futurity. These then are the points; it behoves us to labour most industriously, as being our greatest improvement, which if once completely attained, so as that distant good could be made the subject of joy and desire equally with present, would both conduct us surest to our goal, and render our intermediate journey pleasant.

But it is not enough to take up a general resolution of pursuing always the greater good, for we do not always know in what quarter it lies, and when we clearly discern our way, cannot always bring ourselves to travel in it. For the consequences of actions often terminate so contrary to first appearance, the measures requisite for attaining an advantage are so intricate, and so many things to be taken into consideration which do not easily present themselves, that we need particular rules and maxims to supply the deficiency of our judgment, and serve us respectively for guides in each particular situation of circumstances.

Then desire, though capable of yielding to control, yet will not come and go, stop short, or change its course, upon the word of command; but requires art and management to model it into the shape we want. The necessities and occasions of life oblige us often to confine our whole attention to the present instant, and to objects lying close before us: some innocent desires must be nourished to rouse us to activity, and others not quite so may be usefully employed to assist in mastering the more dangerous: all this discipline we should scarce have skill or strength enough to practise, without some methods and incitements suggested to help us. Add to this, that imagination bearing a very considerable sway in our motions, it will be of the utmost consequence to have this faculty well stored with opinions, sentiments, inclinations, and habits, that it may assist readily in executing the dictates of reason, or act as her deputy in the hurry of business, or upon sudden emergencies, when there is no room for sober deliberation. These rules, and methods, and sentiments, necessary to direct the judgment, to rectify the will, and purify the imagination, make up what I conceive is properly called Religion: which is to be calculated rather for the uses of the heart than of the head, by how much of greater importance it is to practise what we know, than to increase our knowledge.

Therefore I take Religion to be distinguished from Philosophy by having its principal residence in the imagination: not that I mean to insinuate thereby that it is a thing imaginary, or the tenets of it arbitrary; but a man may lay up in mind the discoveries of his understanding, and continue to use them, after he has utterly forgotten the foundations whereon they were grounded. So likewise the produce of sound and solid reasoning may be inculcated into another who has not capacity to judge of them himself, and to him they will be mere persuasions of the mind; nevertheless they may prove of excellent service and necessary use for his conduct. And when we consider that these persuasions are to be calculated for general benefit, as likewise how few there are who could enter into the grounds of them, if laid open ever so carefully to their view, a man that has the good of others at heart will be content to find less of rational inference and connection, than he would desire upon his own private account. These considera-

tions open into a new field, which we shall endeavour to examine more distinctly in the remaining part of our progress.

CHAP. VII.

RELIGION.

If anybody shall expect, from the conclusion of the last chapter and title of this, to see me enter upon forming a complete scheme of rules both for doctrine and practice, he must have a much higher or a meaner opinion of my understanding, than I think any man can deserve: the former, if he supposes me equal to the task; the latter, if he believes me capable of so wild an attempt without probability of success. For to perfect such a design, one had need not only to know the things above, things round about us, and understanding human nature in general, but likewise the passions, affections, apprehensions, capacities, frailties, and advantages belonging to it: together with what I may call the materia medica of morality, that is, the conceptions, persuasions, maxims, customs, institutions, employable therein, their several efficacies or tendencies, their mischievous as well as salutary qualities, and to what particular disorders or purposes of invigorating the health they are respectively applicable.

Yet conscious as I am of insufficiency upon these points, I should neither grudge nor scruple to produce what little I could of my own framing, were such endeavours at all needful: but there is no occasion to undergo the laborious drudgery of making brick without straw, at least until we shall have tried what can be done with the materials already supplied to our hands. When we find them fail of expectation, it will be time enough to think of doing the best we can upon our own bottom: if they do not fail, they will answer our purpose more effectually than anything we could have prepared ourselves: for were it possible to strike out a new system equally good, this might not be so advantageous as building upon an old one. Men are not easily put out of their accustomed trains of thinking, nor will be found willing to take a new road where every thing must appear strange and uncouth: and if they were, could not make so good advances as upon grounds that were familiar to them before.

For this reason, if there were no better, I am warranted in having recourse to the doctrines prevailing in these countries, borrowing from thence what I may want for my future occasions, and supporting what I take upon the foundations already laid down in the foregoing sheets. Not that I mean to call in authority to my aid, for this would be departing from my plan: my first proposal being to build entirely upon human reason, I cannot consistently therewith take anything for authority besides nature and experience; nor did I set out in confidence of any mighty feats I should perform, but only to try for experiment's sake what might be done by my own industry. I am not conscious of having advanced anything in contradiction of the opinions generally received as fundamental, nor yet anything which had not its support independent on them. My not using authority ought no more to be taken as a proof of rejecting than receiving it: for it was my business to go on quietly my own way, without taking side among contending parties; desirous of being thought a neutral, as the character most

suitable to that spirit of reconcilement I have professed all along. Agreeably with this view, I may now proceed to examine what there is conformable between the discoveries of Reason and Revelation, and how far they support, illustrate, and strengthen each other; if perchance I may produce something thereby that may be styled either a Christian Philosophy or a rational Christianity.

Not that I can expect to please everybody by making this attempt; for there are people who seem to have placed the corner-stone of their faith in that text, He that is not with us is against us, and he that gathereth not with us, scattereth. With such there is no medium to be preserved: a favourable word spoken of any they do not like is taken for a declaration of hostility against themselves; as if it were high treason in religion and philosophy to drink a pretender's health. They are more eager to run down an adversary than to labour at their own improvement, as being the less troublesome task; and more afraid lest another should attain any good thing than that themselves should miss of it. For, seeking their credit rather by differing from others than by their intrinsic merit, they cannot hear with patience whatever tends to lessen that difference, which they strive to widen as far as possible: so that he who presumes to doubt of a single truth must be a heretic, an infidel, a man of no principles; and he that believes a single point without a sufficient warrant to their liking, must be a bigot, an enthusiast, a crafty designer upon the liberties of mankind.—Persons of this cast are not to be worked upon by calm reasoning: passion and positiveness are the engines to be employed in dealing with them; so I look upon them as quite out of my province. The best I can hope for is to be taken no notice of; or if they must place me in the light of an enemy, I would choose to stand equally so in the eyes of both parties, esteeming it less disparagement to be thought a scatterer, than to gather firebrands with either side.

But there are many of a different turn, who judging of opinions by their inherent lustre, do not want a foil to set them off, nor lie under temptation to depreciate what they reject, in order to magnify what they adopt; therefore they are candid and favourable to those who seem at widest variance from them, glad to find them less unreasonable than they had imagined, and ready to interpret everything for the best; firm in their own sentiments, yet still better satisfied to find them coincide with those of others; wishing well to their opposers, and therefore rejoiced to see the opposition reduced to a narrower compass, esteeming their own tenets beneficial, and therefore better pleased the more of them can be made appear embraced in substance by such as seemed to reject them in words. Persons of this character will be likely to lend me an attentive ear, and wish me success, how little soever they may expect, or I can promise it: but as they stand at present divided in two different camps, it will be expedient to have a little discourse with each of them separately, before I enter upon my attempt to accommodate matters between both: but in so doing, I must proceed upon the principles peculiar to each, hoping the others will not be scandalized at me for supposing the possibility of truth in what they have pronounced false, but consider me not as laying down any opinion of my own, but using what the schoolmaster calls arguments to the man.

2. And first I shall address myself to those who hold the reality of revelations, and genuineness of those records by which they have been handed down to our times. These they will acknowledge proceeded from the God of love and truth, who had no end of his own to serve therein, but gave

them in pure kindness to mankind: or if they suppose the advancement of his own glory to have been a motive, yet they will hardly imagine he does anything for his glory detrimental to his creatures; but rather that his power and his wisdom were so great, as to make the same means work out the purposes both of Love and Glory. So that the benefit of mankind, if not the sole thing designed, yet was designed in every dispensation of Providence, as well extraordinary as ordinary; and we may say the same of all divine institutions, as we are taught to believe of one in particular, That man was not made for the sabbath, but the sabbath for man.

The next thing to be considered is, in what manner we will conceive that benefit to be operated, whether by a new virtue and efficacy annexed to certain institutions by omnipotence, or by the effect they must naturally have upon the minds and conduct of such as practise them. I hope I shall not give offence, if I am unwilling to admit anything that looks like charm and magic in religion; for he that made us and knows minutely all the springs of our composition, has no need to give a supernatural energy to things insignificant, but can find methods of management suited to the nature and condition of his creatures: therefore shall presume that whatever commands come from God are such, as, if we were able to discern their expedience, we should see it prudent to follow the courses they direct to, although they had not been enjoined; so that we might regard his precepts as issuing from wisdom rather than authority, as advices of one who knows what is best for us, rather than edicts of one whom we durst not disobey, were we of so happy a temper as always to take advice without the dread of authority to enforce it. From hence it follows that reason and nature are the same thing as divinity, that whoever should perfectly understand one should understand both, and every step of real proficiency in either is an advance towards the other.

It has been said by a prelate of no small reputation in the Church, the late Bishop of London, that Christianity was a republication of natural Religion; now if I were to draw the same inference therefrom that has been drawn before, to wit, that it is as old as the creation, and consequently contains nothing material more than might have been discovered by human sagacity, I know it will be objected that in this republication are inserted additions of new matters not to be found in the first edition: but I know not how to remove the objection, for I can muster up no arguments even to persuade myself that the mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and operations of the Holy Spirit, could ever have been reached by the strongest efforts of human reason. Nevertheless, let us examine whether this overthrows our former supposition, that all dispensations of heaven are grounded upon the condition of human nature, and their efficacy dependent thereon: for nature is not what it was when the law of reason was first written upon the understanding, therefore may require fresh additions which were needless before.

I suppose it will be allowed that if man had not rendered himself obnoxious to punishment by his fall, he would have needed no redemption, and consequently no knowledge of the mysteries whereby it might be effected: had his understanding not been darkened, he would have wanted no enlightening from above: had his will retained its native vigour, a divine assistance to second his endeavours had been superfluous. So that these additions, though never discoverable by the best exerted industry, yet the expedience of them was founded upon the nature of man: not indeed

that wherein he was created, but his present corrupted nature. Wherefore the study of This conduces to the more perfect understanding of Them, or at least enables us to make the better application of them to our uses: as a physician ought to know the nature of the disorder and present habit of his patient, before he can administer the remedies he has in store.

Then for that part which is barely a republication, why should we expect mischief from the exercise of reason? so far as this part extends, we may say without offence, that Christianity is as old as the creation; the perfection of morality is still the same it ever was, the book of nature wherein were written the essences of right and wrong, lies open before us without erasement, or variation in the pages, since their first impression: but our faculties are altered, our vision contracted, and our language divided into a Babel of tongues, so that we cannot take in the whole winding periods containing a long series of causes and effects, nor pursue remote and intermediate relations to one conclusion; and when we do read the substance we sometimes express it in terms contradictory to those employed by one another.

Wherefore a republication might be expedient to new model the ancient text into a conciser form, suitable to our comprehension, which wanted particular rules and precepts that might put us upon measures we did not discern the prudence of: and to fix a certain standard of language, which might render our intercourse among one another more commodious and profitable. Nevertheless, it will scarce be doubted that these rules and precepts have a real foundation in right reason and nature, therefore all fair examination of them upon these bottoms ought with more justice to excite our hopes than our alarms: and since we know how variously men turn their thougts, how diversely they connect their ideas, and express themselves upon the same sentiment, it can as little be doubted that there may be a mixture of conformity in opinions seemingly the most opposite; and that every discovery of this is a step towards union, and towards promoting the cause of truth.

I remember to have heard the same good Bishop declare from the pulpit, that we must not judge from the strength of human reason by the works we see performed by it, because the truths of the Gospel have insensibly infused a degree of their own lustre and soundness into the present moral philosophy: and if I may be permitted to add anything from my own experience to so great an authority, I think I have found, on conversing with unbelievers, that they have more of the Christian in them than they know of themselves. Therefore we have less reason to be afraid of them than our forefathers had: for by endeavouring to enter for a while into their conceptions, and following their trains of thinking, if we find nothing to learn by them, we have a chance of attracting them, without their perceiving it, a little nearer to ourselves than they are willing to come.

3. Nor do the divine oracles show themselves averse to the exercise o reason: we are exhorted to try all things, and told that we may know of the doctrines whether they be from God: but how can we make trial of anything without the use of our judgment? or how can we know the internal marks of divinity in a doctrine, unless by comparing it with those ideas of God we have learned before from natural Religion? And if the truth were known, I am apt to believe the internal evidence is what determines most men who do not take up their opinions upon trust: for the external of all kinds has been so perplexed by subtile disputations pro and con, that it requires a compass of reading few have opportunity to go through

to be masters of the argument; but according as they think well or ill of the doctrine, they admit the slightest, or reject the strongest evidence that can be produced to support it.

We may gather further from the style and manner of the Scriptures that they were not intended to supersede the use of human reason, but rather as helps encouraging us to employ it with more alacrity. They are delivered in detached precepts which require judgment to methodize them, and form them, together with our natural notices, to strike out a regular system of conduct. They give contradictory rules, enjoining us to brotherly love, to diligence and industry; yet commanding us to hate father and mother, wife and children, and to take no thought for the morrow; for sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof: things not to be reconciled, nor indeed understood, without sober thought and rational construction. Others unnatural and impracticable. If a man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left; if he would take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also: until opened by the key of reflection upon human frailty, they appear to contain within, not directions for our ordinary conduct, but admonitions to beware that our natural appetites do not get the mastery over us, teaching us not so much what we are to do, as what we ought to render ourselves capable of doing. Others delivered in Riddles and Parables, so that seeing we shall not see, and hearing we shall not understand, unless by using our best wits to dig out their latent meaning.

In short, the figurative style running throughout the sacred words evidently supposes a fund of knowledge previously laid in from other sources: for figures touch neither the imagination nor the understanding. otherwise than by their allusion to things we have been familiarly acquainted with before. Therefore we are told the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive: now what spirit more likely to be meant here as having this vivifying quality than that of sobriety and discretion, nourished up to maturity by due exercise of the several means allotted us for strengthening our faculties? For the Spirit of God will not do all our work for us upon any occasion; it only co-operates with our endeavours, nor will afford us any lights we might have stricken out for ourselves: therefore it behoves us to avail ourselves of our natural lights and powers so far as we can, having no warrant to expect assistance from above, until we have tried our strength upon the materials found below.

But it is said human reason is a dangerous thing, having bewildered many in mazes and fatal errors who have trusted to it: this we do not deny, but is not Scripture too a dangerous thing, having driven multitudes into wild extravagances and pernicious notions who have trusted to their own hasty interpretations of it? Therefore, if the abuse of a good thing were an argument for the total disuse of it, we had best do as the Papists would have us, that is, wrap up our Bibles as well as our talent of reason in a napkin, and content ourselves with such scraps of either as they shall please to deal out among us, cooked up after their own fashion. Let us reflect that nature is the work of God as well as Revelation; why then should we despise his gift, and not rather consider it as another Bible dictated from the same mouth?

So far as we perceive them to agree, we may rest assured of having the true sense of the author: wherever they seem at variance, it is certain we must have misunderstood one, and a shrewd suspicion we may have mistaken both. What then can we do better than carefully to study both, and pursue the comparison between them, in order to apprize us of our mistake,

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or remove the cause of it, by employing them to explain one another? It is too notorious from frequent and fatal experience to be denied that the moment a man throws aside his reason, he has little further benefit to expect from revelation: for though the necessary duties be written there in such legible characters as that he who runs may read, yet he must have learned to read before, or he may stand poring over them by the hour without being a whit the wiser for all he sees.

Without disparagement to the holy writings I may question whether, strictly speaking, they contain a perfect rule of doctrine and conduct; yet they may do it in a looser sense, as containing all that was wanting to supply the defects of that other rule God had given us before for many of our uses: so the perfect rule is made up by the aggregate of both, but we may be said to find perfection in the former with the same propriety as we are said to find health in the prescriptions of a consummate physician; not that we are to live altogether upon physic, nor expect to support our health without our common food, but because the medicines restore our blood to its purity, and our solids to their original tone, thereby bringing our victuals to agree with us and nourish us.

4. We are told the Gospel was preached to the poor, that is the vulgar and illiterate, whose opinions, sentiments, and apprehensions fluctuate from time to time: so that what was a proper regimen for the Jews and Gentiles just fallen under the Roman yoke, may not suit the occasions of the poor in those European countries. And it is admitted by divines, that some precepts are not universally binding, but only upon the persons to whom they were delivered: yet they are not distinguished in the text from the general by an introduction of, This is for the disciples, and This for all mankind. How then shall we distinguish them apart, unless by an attention to human nature, discovering to us what is suitable to it, and what is expedient only for particular occasions?

Nor do we scruple to alter the primitive institutions and practices without other warrant than the necessity and reasonableness of the alteration: Christ sent forth his preachers with nothing more than a staff in their hands, and commanded them, into whatsoever house they should enter, to be content with what was set before them, and after his departure, his Apostles maintained themselves by the work of their hands, or the voluntary contributions of the faithful: whereas our Clergy have revenues, honours, and power, established for them by law, which they would find much harder to defend by the written text, without wresting it violently, than by the expediency of those provisions for the encouragement of learning, and preservation of order and Religion among us. So that if they have a divine right to their possessions, they must derive it through the channels of human nature and good policy, flowing from springs of divine original: and this regulation ought rather to be esteemed a foreign scion engrafted from the law of reason, than a natural shoot from the given law.

Nor do the laity stand in a different case from the clergy, the landholder having no better gospel-right to his nine parts than the parson has to his tithe: for what is more frequently and strongly inculcated by Christ himself than a community of goods? how often are we exhorted, as the first preliminary to entering the kingdom of heaven, to sell all we have and give to the poor? by whom must be meant the community, because if this precept were universally practised, we must all become poor, and all be benefitted by the produce arising from every sale. Nevertheless, this reiterated command obeyed for a little while, was quickly broken through, and has long

since been totally disregarded: Christians now-a-days possess and defend, and if they can, increase their several properties without scruple, yet without pretending the authority of any text to exempt themselves, or to declare the precept temporary or local; without other warrant than from common sense and experience of human nature, which manifests to every apprehension the impracticability of such a scheme, and shows its certain tendency to introduce disorder, confusion, and scarcity; to discourage industry, prudence, and commerce, and destroy that subordination necessary to good government. One may presume this impracticable injunction was laid on purpose to make us see the allowableness and necessity of consulting our own judgment, and even suffering it sometimes to carry us directly counter to the written word: yet without infringing its authority, or proving the command unnatural, wherever nature can be found in that perfection whereto the Gospel was designed to restore it.

For a community of goods is no such extravagant notion, but that we can find the convenience and pleasure of it in little friendly societies for a few hours or a few days continuance. When the company sit down to an entertainment, they have not their several messes in private property, but all lies in common before them; each man calls for what he likes, he carves the meat and helps the rest in the manner he thinks will be most agreeable. If a number of well-behaved and mutually well-disposed persons set out upon a tour of diversion, perhaps they put their money into one common bag: every one orders what is proper for the company, or what he wants for his own occasions, but not more than he has occasion for; one takes care of the carriages, another looks after the provisions, another manages the remittances, all in their several ways bestir themselves to make things agreeable to the whole, without grudging their trouble.

Now did that glowing brotherly love, that unaspiring humility, that soon-contented moderation, that contempt of pain and labour, that unwearied diligence, that unabating activity, that serenity and cheerfulness of temper, which are characteristics of a perfect disciple, prevail among a people, it is easy to imagine they might sit down to the table of nature, or travel the journey of life, which would then become indeed a tour of diversion or rather happiness, more easily and pleasurably with a community of goods, than with any division of property whatever. But we Christians of the present times are not so happily circumstanced: we have a rapaciousness, an engrossing greediness, a desire of superiority, an insensibility to the wants of others, an invincible selfishness, a discontented fretful temper, an averseness to trouble, a dread of labour, a torpid indolence never to be roused unless by the necessity of our station, or allurement of avarice and ambition, or at best an industry misplaced upon trifles, or the difficult gratification of some fond humour. Who then cannot see with half an eye that his knowledge of the world, as at present characterized, may lawfully supersede the obligation of a rule that would be excellent for a nation of thorough Christians?

But lest we should think unworthily of our Lawgiver's wisdom, because we find by the event that his Code has not yet produced its full effect upon mankind, let us recollect that he has given the promise of a Comforter to come, who should bring all things to our remembrance, and instruct us in the understanding of all things necessary for our good: which promise had been needless, had he given his first instructions in such fulness and clearness as to suffice for their purpose without further explanation. But how is this Comforter to come? Do we expect him to make a solemn entry

among us, or descend in a visible shape like a dove? We have no ground to look for any other express messenger from heaven since the Messiah, who was to close up the great transaction between God and man.

The very nature of the errand seems to require the Comforter should have begun his progress already pursuing it by slow and imperceptible advances: his influence was felt by the Apostles and others in the primitive times, and since no good thing can be done without him, we may conclude from that degree of piety and sound knowledge which has never been wholly lost out of the world, that the like influence has continued all along to our days: yet we cannot reckon him fully come until we shall see the promised effects of his arrival among mankind, in their perfect understanding of moral and natural, as well as revealed Religion. In the mean while, he works upon us invisibly and secretly, like the wind which bloweth where it listeth; we hear the sound thereof, but know not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: for he presents no new objects, but clears our optics to discern those we have already; nor, as I observed before, does anything himself, but co-operates with our endeavours first begun. Therefore it behoves us to use all our faculties, and all means of information from whence soever we can draw them, as well from the works as the word of God; comparing them together with the best exercise of our judgment, as the most likely method to put ourselves in a way of obtaining his assistance.

5. I shall next pass over to the other camp, where I must take up principles directly opposite to those I proceeded upon before: for when one goes upon the errand of peace-making, one must not contradict nor thwart, but say the things that will please. Therefore I must now look upon Revelation as incredible, and that what has been palmed upon the world for such, was either the invention of crafty politicians, or the delusions of enthusiasts. For it is necessary to assign the latter a joint share in the performance, because the propagators of the new system were a set of such simple illiterate ignorant creatures, appearing to have followed the present impulse in all they did, that it is impossible to imagine them guilty of any deep-laid scheme or finespun artifice, nor can we carry our suspicion of craft any further than during the Jewish dispensation.

In this apprehension of things we may observe by how many gradual advances, by what a long and complicated tissue of various causes the Religion of mankind was brought into its present form: the rise of a people from one stock, their singular averseness to intermingle among other nations, the original foundation, and subsequent changes of their government, their family attachment, the occurrences befalling them, their prosperities and distresses, the craft of politicians, the exigencies of state, the circumstances of situation, the delusion of enthusiasts, the credulity of a mob, the hasty zeal and passions of ignorant persons, all concurred in the great work. Now unless we allow chance an equal share in the administration of affairs throughout the world, we must needs ascribe this extraordinary concatenation of causes to the hand of God, in the same sense as we would any other producing an important event. For how much soever we may esteem it beneath his Majesty to concern himself with little matters, this is of too extensive an influence to imagine it passing without his regard. The nations of Europe are now mostly Christian, and when we consider that Mahometism is an excrescence, or corruption of Christianity, perhaps as well deserving the name as some systems that still retain it, we must allow that either in its purity or its corruptions, it has spread over the whole civilized world: besides that we know not what opinions may have been adopted from thence

by the few nations still remaining heathen. Shall we then admit that God cares for what affects the condition of empires and cities, but refuse him cognizance of that which has operated upon all mankind?

But it may be alleged there is a distinction to be taken between things appointed and permitted, that delusion and superstition being evils ought to be ranked among the latter, which we cannot, without profaneness, imagine to be God's doing, though we know they could not have happened without his knowledge and acquiescence. Suppose them then evils, yet we know that God permitteth none unless in order to bring forth greater good therefrom: and though the permission of evil be a divine prerogative which we must not presume to imitate, yet where we cannot remedy the evil, it becomes us to examine its nature and tendency, to study what good was designed to be produced thereby, what profit it may be turned to, and lend our helping hand to promote the work of God.

But why must we need suppose Religion to be an evil, or to have thrown mankind into a worse condition than they had stood in without it? Are the Chickasaws, the Twigtwees, and the Hottentots, which are reported to have none, more humane, more enlightened, better policied, or provided with the conveniencies of life than those nations who have some kind of worship among them? The best lawgivers have found it necessary to inculcate the awe of an invisible Power, as serviceable to put a check upon men's conduct in matters that cannot fall under cognizance of the magistrate: wherefore, as the worst government is better than none, the reign of Nero or Domitian preferable to anarchy, so the worship of a stock or stone is better than no worship at all. But it will scarce be denied that Mahometism surpasses the worship of idols, or that the doctrines prevailing in our own country are more rational than Mahometism: why then should we scruple to rank among the providential events described in the last Chapter, or esteem the methods whereby they were introduced to have been of divine appointment, as marked out among the courses of nature and fortune, in the original plan?

If we persuade ourselves that natural reason might serve us better, in God's name let us try the strength of it; for I am no more for discarding reason than any other means of information in my power: but am not ashamed to learn of anybody, even though I were sure he knew less than myself; for still he may know something I do not know, or did not think of, or may suggest a hint I may improve to advantage. But reason has been tried, and though carrying some few men of cool judgment, and great leisure, considerable lengths, has been found insufficient to conduct the busy world, nor completely sufficient even for the studious: for there have been as many schisms and heresies in philosophy as religion, the one leading into as dangerous errors as the other.

Neither could philosophy grow to maturity without the seed sown by the nurse and the priest, for how much soever we may become afterwards wiser than our teachers, the most profound speculatist can scarce imagine he should have run the same lengths of refinement, had he been bred up among the Hottentots: but it is the solicitude for futurity, the persuasion of an invisible nature, the importance of distinguishing between right and wrong, inculcated into us from our childhood, that puts us upon our inquiries and the exertion of our faculties. Therefore, without shutting our eyes either against reason or popular opinion, we may employ them usefully to assist and correct one another: if not because needful in private prudence, at least to render us better capable of doing benefit to others.

6. The interests of the learned and vulgar are blended together, for we

live by society, and our science, as well as our conveniences of life, however worked up by ourselves, are made out of materials prepared for us by other hands. What though the sophists of Greece claimed an all-sufficiency of knowledge, because they made the cloak upon their back and ring upon their fingers? yet I suppose the cloth was spun, and the gold refined from the ore by the ignorant and illiterate, and according as they performed their work, the cloak and the ring would be more or less fine and durable. In like manner, whatever systems we may strike out for ourselves, still the rudiments we set out upon, the application and turn of mind we proceeded with, were derived to us by education, example, and sympathy. And if we be so lucky as to reach the limits of sound philosophy, we shall see plainly by the light of that country, that the treasures found there are not to be locked up for private use, but rendered as universally beneficial as possible by such ways as are feasible.

Therefore it is incumbent upon us to regard popular opinions and customs, for by them we may best serve the general uses: were we assuredly wiser than convocations and synods, we could not open the sources of our wisdom to the world, we could only deal out the streams in salutary precepts, exhorting them to a reverence of the divine Majesty, dependence on his Providence, honesty in their dealings, and industry in their callings, which they must take upon the credit of our authority; but what authority can we expect with those who are no judges of our extraordinary merit? Therefore, how fortunate or rather providential is it, that the same things are recommended by the doctors of the Church? and how imprudent would it be to weaken their authority, which is the sole engine we have wherewith to work our honest purposes? For the end crowns the work, and in many cases the intention will sanctify the deed: it is a great matter if we can compass what is right, though we should not be able to explain the why, but employ any why that will best go down with the people.

As much as we may laugh at grandmother Eve and her apple, or the romantic perfection of Paradise, certain it is that human nature and human understanding are now far from being perfect; and though it should not be owing to that cursed pippin having spoiled our constitution, we are manifestly a weakly, distempered race of mortals, who must be managed with art and medicine to make our natural aliment digest. We have no experience of doing anything unless by immediate application of our bodily powers thereto, or by setting other persons at work whom we can command, nor of giving information otherwise than by the words of our mouth: so the generality conceive of God as performing his works by direct exertions of omnipotence, or the ministry of his angels, or declaring his mind by secret influences or revelations. Nor is it necessary they must be superstitious herein, for superstition is relative, that which would be such in one man being none in another, according to the extent of their comprehension.

Philosophy shows the reason of ascribing some events, somes rules of action, and some truths, to divine original; but philosophy cannot explain to common capacity the long chain of second causes lying between the first operation and visible phenomena; therefore it is no encouragement of superstition to shorten the line for each man to a length that will just lie upon the scale of his imagination, nor does superstition begin, until you cut off a part of the line that his scale might have borne. The necessities of life demand our attention among sensible objects to provide for them; reason directs to apply a part of our thoughts to our spiritual concerns: some few may be led by inclination or habit to employ the due proportion this way

occasionally, but it is easy to guess this dictate of reason would be generally neglected without certain stated times appropriated to the performance of it. Perhaps the philosopher might think one day in ten enough, or one in five but just enough, or he would certainly see that Wednesday might do as well as Sunday, but if it would not do better, why should he wish to put men out of their way? or who would mind the philosopher so far, as to throw aside his common business every Wednesday to please him? Nor need he disturb himself at the reasons given for observance of one day in seven, because God rested from his works, or the Resurrection happened on such a particular day: for these are good reasons if they be such as will weigh. And if there be some so gross and narrow-minded as to imagine an intrinsic sacredness in the day, yet if they are likewise of such an indolent dilatory disposition as never to do what may be done as well another time as now, it would do hurt to undeceive them.

The like may be said of other customs esteemed sacred; if not valuable in themselves, they may lead into practices and sentiments which it might be impossible to make manifest to every eye; so that men, while following a shadow cast by skilful honest hands, may be enabled to catch a solid substance they know nothing of, nor would be persuaded to lay hold on. There is this advantage in all discipline, even though practised in trifles, that it inures men to order and rule, and to resist a present fancy, and renders them more susceptible of benefit from the knowledge of what is right, whenever they can attain it. Therefore, if we consider Religion only as the scaffolding of reason, it is well worth our attention; for whether human nature in its present condition be an unfinished building, or the ruins of an ancient structure, it requires the same treatment in either case; let us then examine carefully whatever remains of the foundation, and use what helps we can to erect anything solid thereupon; when the edifice shall be completed, it may serve for all our uses, but any one that contemplates the present state of it, may see that it is much too early to strike the scaffolding yet.

7. But it is suggested, that many doctrines are propagated among the vulgar contrary to reason and subversive of morality, contrived by designing persons solely for their own profit and aggrandizement. What then? may not we pick out the corn from the chaff? and is it not worth while to sift them carefully that we may know how to distinguish them; rather than cast away both out of wantonness or laziness? If we find anything manifestly superstitious, we shall do well to oppose or qualify it by a rational construction, always taking with us the caution given in the last section, to remember that superstition is relative, for else we may chance to do mischief by our indiscretion. And if some crafty persons have imposed upon mankind, why should we not endeavour to turn their cannon against them by drawing a better conclusion from the premises whereon they build those doctrines? for they will not avow their selfishness; whatever their real intention be, they profess to labour in the redemption from sin and wickedness: let us then take them at their word, and study to do sincerely what they profess; whatever we can clearly show to have a contrary tendency we may safely reject, they dare not contradict us if they would.

The fund from whence they pretend to draw all their supplies, runs in such figurative expressions as are susceptible of different colours; experience shows how many pernicious and contrary interpretations have been given to the same texts, and the like experience shows what rational doctrines and rules of conduct have been supported upon them: therefore, without

troubling our heads about the design wherewith anything was written or taught, let us strive to turn everything in a manner that may prove advantageous to the interests of sound reason and morality. Though Religion were no more than an artifice to enslave reason and serve private ends, under pretence of public benefit, yet had we the like zeal to set our wits and industry at work in a good cause as we suppose others to have in a bad one, it might not be impossible to find honest artificers for restoring reason to her liberty and doing a real benefit to mankind, under an appearance of supporting the doctrines esteemed sacred.

But why need we judge so unfavourably of men, as to pronounce them actuated solely by selfish views in everything they do redounding to some private advantage of their own? Is honesty of so repellant a nature as to render it incapable of ever joining with policy? Can we never serve our neighbour without sacrificing our own interests? We find most characters contain a mixture of good and bad: cunning seldom so engrosses the whole man as to leave no room for the moral senses, nor does his partiality for himself exclude all love of truth or regard for others. What if Moses set out upon his enterprise with a prospect of raising himself to royal power, are all politicians such vile creatures as to care nothing for anybody else? if the public good comes in competition with their private interests, we may guess which they will pursue: but where not inconsistent therewith, what should hinder but they may bestow a thought upon it? It is most natural to imagine they will take it up for a secondary aim, because serving to raise them in esteem and reputation with the people. Why then might not he proceed partly upon a real solicitude for the welfare of his nation, giving them such regulations as might produce order, polity, and good manners among them; and even framing his inventions upon observation of their character, in such manner as to lead them imperceptibly into sentiments and practices conducive to their happiness?

And for the spiritual directors of our own times, though we may allow them subject to human infirmity, which will unavoidably give a bias to self-interest, yet we can hardly believe them all joining in support of a mere politic imposture, discerned in their consciences to be such. We may know some among them of serious and even scrupulous characters, having an abhorrence of injury to truth or their fellow-creatures; and if we must lay it down as incontestible, that they weigh their external evidences in the scale of prejudice which gives a weight to what had none before: this prejudice must arise in the best of them from their opinion of the internal, which it may be presumed they judge of in the same manner as other people judge of other things, by observation on the natural tendency of rules, and experience of their effects; wherein they certainly are liable to error, yet surely not incapable of ever discerning the truth.

Why then should we so wrap ourselves up in the conceit of our own consummate accomplishment, as to think there is nothing can be learned from another, or to despise in the lump a whole set of regulations, established by the wisdom of politicians, and approved by well-intentioned persons of good natural and improved understandings? and not rather give them a thorough examination, for the chance of finding an expedience in some of them we were not aware of? For expedience is the thing to be principally regarded; the want of looking for this in measures leads both sides into mistakes; the weakly righteous finding certain forms recommended by the judicious, and perceiving their good effects were practised, conclude them to have an intrinsic value, and if men of profound learning, they hunt for scholastic

subtilties to support their notion; the weakly rational, discerning the fallacy of this intrinsic value, conclude as hastily there is no value in them at all. Whereas both may be in the wrong, for things insignificant in themselves may be productive of a solid and substantial benefit: even error is sometimes expedient for people who will take a bad reason for doing a good thing, when they cannot see the force of a good reason, provided the error do not draw on mischiefs greater than the service it does.

8. Nobody can deny that schemes of avarice, ambition, and tyranny over the very thoughts, as well as persons and properties of men, have been erected upon the basis of Religion, which is apt to give men a prejudice against the root that can bear such pernicious fruits. But we should consider that our antagonists may retort the argument upon us, for reason too has been found to make wild work in some hands, and if it has never done such extensive mischief, it was for want of strength to take hold of the populace: therefore, if religion, which has by far the greater innate vigour, can be brought to assist in the purposes of reason, much more may be done with than without such help.

But it is unfair to take the character of either from their appearance under the disguises wherewith they have been covered; when made subservient to the purpose of private passions, which it is their proper office to regulate and control, they become corrupted; in this state they lose their essence, being no longer their real selves. The Cynics, the Epicureans, and Pyrrhonians were much such philosophers, as the Gnostics, the Muggletonians, and the Moravians were Christians; and he that should think to form his judgment of Reason or Religion from these patterns, would do as wisely as if he expected to discover the alimentary qualities of fruits by analyzing such as were rotten. To have a true idea of things, one ought to know the best they are capable of, which can never be learned from them in their depravities, nor without examining them in the fairest lights, and observing to what uses they are applicable.

Philosophy may be styled the art of marshalling the ideas in the understanding, and Religion that of disciplining the imagination. Now it is the perfection, not perversion, of a method that constitutes the art, which title no more belongs to delusion in the one, than to sophistry in the other; or if these must be called arts, they are distinct arts from that which they profess; so that we shall pass our judgment never the surer upon That, for being acquainted with the mischiefs of Them. It has been made appear upon several occasions in the course of this work, that imagination bears as great a sway in our motions as understandings; That must execute what This projects, or nothing will be done further than in speculation.

It is well known there are persons who can give excellent counsel but can never follow it themselves; these people do not want understanding, but they want an incitement to practise what they know; which is to be gotten by habit and discipline, rather than calm argumentation; so their knowledge is of less benefit to themselves than to others, the bent of whose imagination and desire is strongly turned upon doing what is right. On the other hand, many who cannot discover the rectitude of measures, may yet be brought to pursue such of whose rectitude they are persuaded; but then this persuasion must be worked by authority, example, or custom, upon those who are not capable of rational conviction: and the wisest of us scarce being able to investigate everything to the fountain head, it will be safest to follow custom and authority, in matters wherein we have not a full

and clear discernment, and consequently to be wished for our own sakes that authority and custom may direct the right way.

Wherefore it well deserves our pains to study attentively that art whereby desire, opinion, apprehension, and all the family of imagination may be managed, in order to learn from thence how that vigorous faculty may be turned to execute the purposes of reason, for by bringing them to join forces in the same work, we may do good service as well to ourselves as to our fellow-creatures. And if we do not like the method of practising this art now taken among us, yet considering how hard it is to break through established customs and rivetted opinions, we may find it more feasible to work good purposes out of them, than to do good by overthrowing them. What though they had been first introduced and since maintained by designing persons for sinister ends, this would not hinder our trying to make them answer better ends than were designed.

Yet I do not know why we should confine our thoughts to the machinations of men who are but instruments in the hand of Heaven in all they do, turned this way or that by the provision of causes pre-ordained from above. But the system they have propagated spreads too extensive an influence, as we observed before, to doubt of its being among the appointments of Providence, which we know frequently employs the follies, the passions, the errors, the wickedness of men to accomplish purposes they know not of. The ways of Providence are often unaccountable, conducting surely to an aim by means seeming the most unlikely to attain it, and though such means having been used will not justify us in joining against our judgment with whatever we have in our power to alter, yet where we cannot put things out of their course, it would be in vain to kick against the pricks; our business here is to submit, not to resist; to learn, not to judge. For we may presume that Providence knows the propriety of measures somewhat better than ourselves: therefore, if we set ourselves to study diligently the measures it takes, their effects and tendencies, it is not impossible we may find uses in things appearing insignificant and nugatory, expedience in what we thought at first pernicious, good fruits growing from roots of an evil quality, and salutary provisions in what we had apprehended to be evils.

9. Having now apologized with both parties for my attempt, I may hope for their candid reception of what I shall offer in the prosecution of it, and that they will believe me a well-wisher to both in all matters that do not tend to injure the other. As I have professed a strict neutrality, I shall not wittingly take part on either side, but make it my business to search for such points as may be agreed to consistently with both their principles; wishing I could bring them both to join under one banner, because conceiving more good might be done to mankind by their united efforts, than by their divisions: but if this be too romantic a scheme, at least desirous to render them less odious and contemptible to one another, and less negligent of what hurt they may do among by-standers by their scuffles.

I have worked hitherto solely upon the fund of natural reason, labouring the best I could to make my building solid and coherent in its parts. I have quoted authority as occasion offered, not so much in support of my edifice, as with a view to my present design of showing a similitude of structure therewith. I proceed now to examine the opinions commonly taught among us by the lights I have already gathered, in order to discover what they contain conformable with the productions of human reason, and

bring forth to coincide so far as they will bear; esteeming that the truest interpretation of a doctrine, which appears most consonant to reason, and that the surest decision of reason which stands confirmed by the doctrines received. In doing this, one must manage with calmness and caution, not wresting either of them violently to serve the purposes of the other, as your zealots of all kinds too commonly do, but bending them gently as one would a tender twig, so as not to bruise, nor injure, nor rend it from the parent plant.

The incorporation seems likeliest to succeed by following that method the gardeners call grafting by approximation, wherein the branches of two stems planted near each other, are brought gradually to approach until they touch; they then are bound close under one ligature, in order to make them grow together; but this they will not do, unless some of the bark and rind of both be pared off, and their sides flatted and smoothed, so that the sap vessels may open into one another, the vital juices mingle, and the circulation mutually communicate between them. When found to have thoroughly coalesced, one is cut off below, and the other above the juncture, whereby the remaining shoot will become a branch of the other tree: and this may be done upon either of them at pleasure, according to the gardener's own wants, or the demands of his customers.

If something of the like process were tried upon Philosophy and Religion, I apprehend they might both receive considerable improvement: for by piercing through the outward forms and idioms into the sap and spirit, which might mutually assimilate by degrees, the coolness of the one would temper the warmth of the other, and in return derive a fructifying vigour therefrom, to the great advantage of both. For Reason is a very indifferent bearer, its juices viscid, and its circulation slow, producing leaves and blossoms, and knotty excrescences copiously enough, but seldom bringing any serviceable fruit to maturity without any great advantages of soil, painful cultivation, and continual tendency. Whereas Religion is a prodigious bearer, oftener redundant than barren in the poorest grounds: but the strong tone of its vessels and its precipitant circulation drive on the juices before well digested, and are apt to throw crudities into the fruit, which will, like some pears, frequently contain more of woody concretion than wholesome pulp.

As to the choice of either to be saved for the stem or the stock, this may be left to discretion: the studious man will probably graft Religion upon Philosophy for his own use, but the contrary for the generality. In both cases, provided he employ healthy stocks of the genuine kind, uncankered with prejudice or peculiarity, and the inoculation be skilfully performed, the fruits will be the same in substance, only differing a little in colour and flavour, and perhaps the leaves and twigs differently shaped and set on: so that however appearing two distinct species to the common beholder, they will have the same nutritive effect upon the constitution of the user. And for our better encouragement to endeavour the association, we may remark that the ends proposed by both to our attainment are similar.

Philosophy leads us by the contemplation of nature to discover the power and the goodness of God, whose views never terminate upon evil, whose universal Providence connects all his perceptive creatures in one common interest: whence we are to regard ourselves as citizens of the world, promoting its benefit in that little part of it wherewith we have intercourse, and increasing the quantity of happiness in any subject wher-

ever we can. Christianity instructs us to do all things for the glory of God, to rest our dependence upon him, to behold him in the amiable light of an indulgent father ordering all things for our good, to consider ourselves as members of Christ, which is but another phrase to express citizens of the world, he being the first-born and head of every creature, who are his members, and fellow-members of one another; to love our neighbour as ourselves, nor to stop there, but pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us, to feed our enemy if he hunger, and if he thirst to give him drink. One recommends prudence and benevolence as the two pillars whereon to erect our rules of conduct: the other advises to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. One warns us to beware of appetite and passion, nor ever suffer them to usurp upon the authority of reason: the other exhorts to subdue our fleshly lusts, and bring the carnal man under subjection to the spiritual. One describes the passage through matter as a short excursion leading to our natural residence in the society of pure spirits: the other calls life a journey through the vale of mortality, and heaven our proper home. In short, the true drift of both is none other than the advancement of happiness among men as well in body as mind: and whatever in either leads aside from that aim, or conduces nothing towards it, may be pronounced spurious or erroneous.

10. Nevertheless, it must be confessed, that Religion contains many things having no immediate relation thereto: it lays great stress upon forms, ceremonies, and strength of persuasion: it seems to enjoin arbitrary precepts, to inculcate the necessity of doctrines merely speculative, to demand assent without conviction or even comprehension of the truths assented to; it takes a compass to attain its end, turning our backs against reason in some parts of the way; it leads the votary along darksome passages, where he must follow implicitly because bidden, without knowing why, or whither going; it speaks in figurative expressions, and gives enigmatical commands, which must be understood with full confidence of having attained the right interpretation, at the hazard of all our hopes and all our happiness.

We are told the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive: but how have doctors differed, and damned one another for their adherence to the express words, or the latent meaning! And even in the Parts remaining undisputed, it is often difficult to discern which is form, and which is substance directly operating to salvation, or remotely necessary to lead into the way of it. So that it may be compared to a Walnut, divided into such multiform quarters as require great nicety to peel without hurting the nut; if you go to pare it with a knife as you would an apple, you will take off part of the kernel, and leave part of the skin. Nay, considering the great difference of constitutions, and how many there are that cannot digest the kernel without the skin, nor will swallow the latter unless you persuade them it is kernel, it may be almost impossible to manage so dexterously as neither to do real hurt to the weak, nor disgust the strong.

These considerations may warn us sufficiently what slippery ground we are going to enter upon, where we must not tread with fear and trembling, nor yet with rashness; but endeavour to maintain an unruffled courage well compatible with vigilant caution, though not with terror and trepidation. He that is obliged to walk upon the edge of a precipice must overcome his fears, or they will certainly throw him down; or if he suffer his thoughts to fall off their guard for a moment, the danger will be as great. Therefore we shall resolve to proceed with a circumspect, unbiassed freedom, soli-

citous not to give offence, more solicitous to do no real damage anywhere, but unsolicitous of that favour which arises from partiality to the prejudices of others. But since freedom has been so grossly misunderstood as to be taken by some for perverseness and obstinacy, and placed by others of confined views and narrow prejudices in a bold opposition against whatever they do not like, it will be expedient to know something of its genuine nature, before we venture upon the exercise of it: and because it is of no small avail towards keeping us in the right way, to observe the turnings on either hand that lead astray from it, we shall bestow some time upon examination of the principal hindrances that ordinarily obstruct the course of a true freedom of inquiry and judgment.

CHAP. VIII.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.

EDUCATION, example, and custom, are the first channels of knowledge and accomplishment; it is these make the difference between the civilized and the savage: for neither reason nor history leave room to imagine a particular virtue in climates, inspiring judgment and science into the inhabitants born therein with the air they breathe, nor that there are not those in the most barbarous countries, who strike out as large improvements as can be made by a single person unaided by his neighbours. But single persons can make very little advances of themselves, nor does the difference between one people and another arise from any other cause, than the mutual communication of lights among them. The experience of those who have gone before us, conveyed by instruction, shortens our road to knowledge, and by lifting us over a considerable part of the way, leaves us in fresh vigour and spirits to pursue the rest, or run further lengths beyond. For at our entrance into life everything is new, everything unknown, so there is no ground whereon to build a rational conviction, nor other reason to be had for assenting to any thing, than because we were taught it. And the like may be said of any particular art or science, wherein docility is the first requisite enabling us to make a proficiency: for judgment comes from experience, and experience is only gotten by pactice: but the ways of practice necessary for gaining experience must be suggested to us, and entered upon without any knowledge of their expedience, unless what we learn from instruction.

But the pleasures, the passions, and the levity of youth, perpetually drawing off their attention, render it necessary to raise up contrary passions for keeping them observant, as likewise for preventing their being bewildered by the many opposite documents abroad in the world: so they are plied with topics of fear and shame, to make them persevere in the truth they have been put into, the peculiar excellence of it is continually chimed in their ears, and great cautions urged to beware of seducers that would lead them astray. And after having followed their guides some time, the ease of acting and thinking in a particular track gives them an habitual liking thereto, and casts a strangeness and uncouthness upon everything not exactly comformable therewith. Hence we very commonly find, that proficients in all sciences, professions, and ways of life, conceive a prodigious

opinion of the trains of thought and courses of practice whereto they have been accustomed, with a sovereign contempt of all others in comparison with their own.

This prejudice arising from education, or where that has been neglected, from some teacher or company happening to gain an ascendant over the mind, is excusable in the vulgar of all ranks, who have no rules nor sentiments, but what were inculcated into them, and are no hindrance to their freedom of thought which they are not capable of exercising; for where there is no power, there is no room either for liberty or restraint. But wanting either leisure or capacity to penetrate below the surface, they dwell upon externals, or catch at some favourite word, such as church, or faith, or grace, or liberty, or reason, or nature, or rectitude, the proper import of which they do not understand: and if they push their zeal to extravagances, it is more the fault of their leaders than their own, for they would each follow his own way without disturbing one another, where their own passions and interests are not immediately concerned, if not instigated by persons who have private ends to serve, or whimsical humours to gratify upon them. Therefore the sources of narrow-mindedness, considered as a fault of the Will, and not a natural imbecility, must be sought from among such, as were enabled by nature and their situation to have enlarged their understanding beyond the knowledge infused into them by example and precept.

For instruction will not do everything alone; it can neither be given so fully as to reach every particular case of conduct that may happen, nor so clearly as to leave no hazard of being ever misunderstood: besides that, change of circumstances and new scenes of life occurring will require other rules than those we have been provided with, and the best of teachers being fallible, will unavoidably mingle something of error and human imperfection in their system. Therefore he that has eyes to see, as well as ears to hear, must see for himself, as well as listen to what is told him, and employ his private judgment to understand, to apply, to enlarge, or to correct the learning he has received from education, example, or custom.

But this exercise of private judgment is a very difficult task to manage, and its decisions liable to the same inconveniences, as those made for us by other people: for it being impossible in any science, even in the mathematics, to carry the whole process in our heads whereby we arrived at any truth, we must rest upon the character of assurance we find it bear in our imagination; by which means our own predeterminations come to operate upon us in the same manner with the notions we were bred up in, that is, by their authority. But this authority wants the further use of judgment to rescue us from oppression under it, full as often as the other: for judgment ripens by experience, which we acquire gradually, nor is it uncommon for subsequent experience to give us a very different notion of things from that left upon us by a former. Nor is it always easy to distinguish between what we had discovered ourselves, and what we have imbibed from our teachers, or catched by sympathy from the company we have consorted with; for often forgetting the channels through which our persuasions were derived to us, we regard them as self-evident principles, manifested by a kind of intuitive evidence: whence come the notions of innate ideas, of essential and eternal truths, of inherent rectitude, beauty and laudableness of actions good in themselves, and the like; which are supposed immediate objects of an internal sense, discovering them by a sagacity of discernment,

not by investigations of reason, whose business it is rather to defend and enforce, than to weigh or examine them.

The high veneration commonly inculcated for the ways and principles men have been brought up in, becomes transferred to the internal sense as soon as they conceive it opening, that is, as soon as it seems to distinguish the character of truth, or expedience, independent on the teacher's authority; especially if it discovers errors and imperfections in the things they have been taught, for then it appears more venerable than that they were habituated to venerate. This veneration for their sagacity of discernment, and the predeterminations fixed thereby, not unfrequently grows into a strong passion which casts shackles upon the thought: for innocent mistake or ignorance may proceed from other causes, but it is always some secret passion that infringes upon our liberty, forcing us into a train of thought conformable to its interests, and restraining us from looking upon whatever seems to endanger them. It would be endless to hunt after all the extravagancies this passion leads into, but when it happens to take the road of Religion, it divides into two principal branches: one upon confidence of knowing the road better and running greater lengths in it than anybody else, and this ends in Bigotry; the other of having found the beaten road hollow, as running along fairy ground, with a resolution of steering as wide from it as possible, and this draws off into what is usually called Free-thinking.

2. But how far asunder soever these two branches may point, one may observe a resemblance in the manner of laying them out, and a mixture of each other's character in the projectors. For the bigot is a free-thinker with repect to the doctors of his Church, delighting to censure their expositions and practices, as deviations from the primitive purity: and the free-thinker is a bigot to certain favourite principles, the infallibility of his reason, the self-evidences of abstracted truths, the absurdity of divine interpositions, and the touchstone of ridicule, nor will hear a word that should be spoken of them disrespectfully.

Both are alike presumptuous, arrogant, self-sufficient, indissolubly wedded to their own peculiar notions, confiding in their sagacity of discerning truths intuitively; judging of their merit by comparison, and therefore looking upon the rest of mortals with a contemptuous pity, thereby to heighten their own superiority over them; impatient of contradiction, scorning to learn as implying imperfection, but aiming to draw all others after them; ambitious of shining every where, and appearing persons of consequence, disdainful of common achievements, but pushing always at extraordinary lengths.

The views of both lie confined within a scanty compass, for they care little to observe human nature, to study the passions and affections, their proper balance, their uses and abuses, to consult the general convenience, to suit their doctrines to the capacities, and the various stations of life wherein men are engaged: but frame their system both of opinion and conduct, agreeably to their own situation and usages, and then expect that everybody should conform strictly to their plan. They make mighty pretence of zeal for the public good, but then it extends only to such of the public as chime in with their schemes; for all the rest they detest or despise.

Both entertain narrow conceptions of the supreme Being, taking their idea of him from human affections, and human understanding, and confi-

dently persuading themselves that their picture is an exact copy of the original: thus depressing him to their own level as a shorter way than striving to imitate his perfections, and depreciating their fellow-creatures until they conceit themselves raised far above the midway between them and their Creator. Both agree to place the whole sum and substance of Religion in forms and creeds; which the one therefore regards as the sole thing essential, in contempt of practical sentiments and the common duties of their station; while the other, finding no essential value in them, concludes unfavourably of Religion itself, as containing nothing solid or useful.

3. The bigot has been carefully trained up, or terrified by the rantings of some gifted preacher into a serious and industrious temper; he plies close to his lessons, and gains applause for his diligence and proficiency: he hears grievous lamentations at the universal depravity and blindness of mankind, is perpetually taught the doctrine of the straight gate, and put in mind how happy it is that he has the means and disposition of mind afforded for entering it. He looks upon it as his indispensable duty to attain a higher degree of perfection than ever yet was attained, at least since the primitive times; he affects to talk meanly of himself, as unable to do or think anything that is good, but that God will give his abundant grace to such as call upon him earnestly. He sighs and groans at the infatuation of mankind, as giving a real grief and vexation to the Holy Spirit, whose fondness thereby becomes more strongly attached to those very few that seek him, and he is sure none seek more earnestly than himself: so of course he must be the prime favourite of Heaven, to whom he is become necessary, because without him there would be no true worship in the world.

He shows a strong propensity to work miracles, but the inquisitiveness of the times not permitting, he deals largely in secret whispers, private illuminations, and inward feelings, wherein nobody can contradict him. Providence seems to have nothing else to do than to tend to his minute motions, and every little turn of chance respecting him is an interposition of Heaven. He thinks himself humble, but sees none comparable to himself in that only valuable quality, a zeal for the divine glory: if he has any sincere wishes for the good of others, they are overwhelmed by the joy of gathering a multitude of followers, whom he strives to chide and affright into his train, rather than to invite and persuade; for he does all in eagerness and anger, and whoever proves refractory he censures and damns most unmercifully. He penetrates into the secret counsels of Heaven, sees minutely its ways of proceeding, what is a mercy and what a judgment: for having the spirit of the Lord he must know the mind of the Lord, and be the sure interpreter of his word, which to the carnal-minded, that is, to all other persons, appears in such manner as that seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not understand.

He searches the Scriptures daily, for he talks scarce any other language, hunts perpetually for texts to support his particular persuasions, turns the most foreign so as to make them serve his purpose, introduces them by head and shoulders upon the most trifling occasions, and this he calls searching. He finds them inculcate strongly the duties of prayer, of abstinence, of almsgiving, of devout exercises together with a good life: so he pronounces a good life to consist wholly in them, and that crying incessantly, Lord, Lord, is doing the Will of our Father which is in heaven. He would have everybody hunt lectures from morning to night, or sing

psalms every third hour, or continually ejaculate at their work, or mingle prayers among their diversions, starve themselves both in food and clothing, but give him all their money to dispose of in pious uses and purchase himself more followers and more adoration. He scorns to study human nature, for nature is utterly corrupted by the fall, and we are to act as contrary to it as possible, living in the world as though we were not in the world.

He wants calmness enough to observe that a crooked stick must be bent the contrary way just so much beyond the line, as you expect it will recoil after taking off your hand: so a prudent teacher will enjoin a greater strictness than he wishes should be adhered to, allowing for the recoil of natural appetites, old desires and habits: but he keeps bending on with all his might, until by continual pressure he brings the stick to remain in the opposite curvature. He moves solely by zeal, and is an utter stranger to discretion; nor ever regards what is feasible, but what is right in his own theory. He considers not that there are many necessary professions which require the whole application to fulfil the duties of them, and that men may be pious and useful members of society, without being divines: but having nothing else to do himself, with neither knowledge, genius, nor ability for any other employment, he would persuade all mankind to follow their respective callings only by the by, making divinity their principal study, because then they must all resort to his oracle, from whence alone they can receive it genuine.

4. The free-thinker perhaps too has imbibed his principles from the persons among whom he was bred up; or perhaps has been bred up in no principles at all, but catches at any specious pretences suggested to cover him from the shame of following uncontrolled appetite and humour, which he calls nature: or it may be, has been educated a little too strictly by persons better versed in the forms and tenets of Religion than the ends they were calculated to answer; but being of a lively, volatile temper, he digests nothing of what is taught him, his lessons become dry, all appears task and burden, and he despairs of ever making the proficiency required of him as an indispensable duty. Under this uneasiness he meets with somebody who in a confident air talks slightingly of the discipline that has disturbed him, reflects on his teachers as proceeding more by rote than judgment, finds fault with their documents, and perhaps justly in the manner they have been delivered, convinces him that forms and articles have nothing essential in them, that if men would do what they know to be right, performing their duties as members of society, they would want nothing else, and makes wondrous merry with the dogmaticalness of pedants, and the superstitions currently esteemed sacred among the vulgar.

These comfortable discourses, addressed both in the argumentative and ludicrous parts to the good sense of our pupil, well suiting his convenience and sprightly temper, quickly wear off what little reverence he may have remaining for his instructors: he is conscious of having received no benefit from their teaching, nor found anything deeper than form and words; sees himself wiser than them, and rejoices in the freedom of thought, now at length emancipated from their fetters. But whatever source he derives his notions from, whether education, example of his parents, or accidental insinuations that have gained credit with him by hitting his fancy, he esteems them all his own discoveries: for he will take nothing upon trust, nor otherwise than as hints, until made his own by having the sanction of his udgment. He hates trouble, thinks all painful investigation needless, as

tending only to perplex, and makes his decisions easily without scruple or diffidence.

This gives him a superlative conceit of his own understanding, which can discern right and wrong at a glance, for whatever strongly strikes his fancy carries an intrinsic beauty, and whatever does not coincide with his ideas, he will venture to say must be absurd in itself: by these marks he distinguishes the essence of things, as the eye distinguishes colours upon inspection. In this faculty he participates of the divine nature, for God is perfect reason, whose intelligence may indeed be somewhat larger in compass, but in kind he will venture to say, must be just the same with his own, for there are no degrees in certainty and intuition, the merest idiot who can just know two and two make four, knows that as certain as Newton. He talks much of a nature of things, binding upon the Almighty, and marking out the field for omnipotence to range in, therefore, by knowing that, he knows precisely what God can, or cannot do: but he never vouchsafes to explain what he means by Nature, or what by Things, and if you ask him, he laughs at your stupidity, or when most gracious, tells you that you will not know, for fear it might undeceive you in some prejudice of education.

He knows nothing of human nature, as if Man was not among the things whose nature is continually in his mouth, but expects that every porter and chairman should discern what is right without instruction or guidance. He never tries to improve the knowledge of mankind or strike out any practical system preferable to those in vogue: whose uses he takes no pains to examine, nor what inconvenience might ensue if they were abolished without substituting something better in their room. His delight lies wholly in opposition: if men believe nothing that is taught them, it is enough; no matter what else they believe. To build up would be laborious and pedantic, much more to defend such an edifice as he could raise if it should chance to be attacked: so he takes the easier, pleasanter, safer task of pulling down. He loves to pick holes or make them wherever he can, to trip up an adversary at unawares, or find an infirmity in persons of esteemed characters.

He is not so prone to anger as the bigot, except now and then when gravelled in argument, but as utter a stranger to discretion: for he will have his joke in season and out of season, and is never better pleased than in puzzling an illiterate person upon some common article of belief. Ridicule is his trusty weapon, as doing its work much quicker or cleverer than argument, for what cannot stand that touchstone, must needs be absurd: but any queer fellow that tries to joke upon him only makes himself ridiculous, for he never sees an absurdity in his own character though pointed out ever so clearly, so sees no joke in anything said to expose it, and will venture to say he knows what is a good jest, as well as a good reason. He affects to appear mighty full of doubts, but in reality never doubted of anything: for what he pretends to doubt of, he is absolutely sure must be false, because he discerns the character of absurdity in it by his moral sense.

He takes his idea of Christianity sometimes from the extravagances of the Methodists, sometimes from the tyrannical policy of the Papists, and perceives no inconsistency in making it either the delusion of silly enthusiasts, or the deep-laid schemes of crafty deceivers to raise immense riches and power, according as serves his present purpose. He runs down charity, and cries up benevolence, but grossly mistakes both the one and the other: for he places charity solely in building churches or giving money to beggars and benevolence in easiness of carriage and a cheerful conversation, or in

doing any obliging office for a friend, or acquaintance, that may be done without much trouble to yourself. He abhors persecution as an invasion of the rights of mankind, but he criticises and teases, derides and runs down with his contemptuous sneer whatever he does not like, the only means of persecution in his power: as if mankind had not a right to candid and equitable judgment with respect to their good name, as well as to their liberties and properties. He laughs at Satan and the burning fiery furnace; and remarks very profoundly that anger is a passion, and God being dispassionate reason, cannot be angry nor displeased with anybody: but could do no more than give men the faculty of reason with a freedom of indifference, which if they abuse by superstition and bigotry, they must inevitably run themselves into perpetual mischief, nor can the divine power help them, for it is not in the nature of things that they should be happy.

5. Thus have I attempted to sketch out the lengths both of bigotry and free-thinking: if there be no real characters in life that take in the whole compass, I am heartily glad of it, and should be better pleased to stand convicted of having exaggerated matters, than found to have given a true picture of living originals. But I fear there are too many in the world who have made larger advances either way than they know of themselves: for neither bigot nor free-thinker will ever own or is ever conscious of his being such, nor ever fails of distinguishing the other plainly. For we can easily see the budget upon our neighbour's back, but nothing is harder than to penetrate our own secret motives of conduct and grounds of persuasion, desire having a more intimate connection with assent than is commonly imagined. There is a satisfaction attending the discernment of truth, which serves us for the mark to distinguish single truths, not immediately supported by others, and makes us, as it were, feel them, whence comes the epithet Palpable applied to truth or falsehood: now there are other satisfactions springing from latent desires, that frequently beguile us by giving that pleasing countenance to whatever they fasten upon, which is the proper characteristic of truth clearly discerned. And perhaps there is a spice of either character, if not a mixture of both, greater or less in the composition of every man: for we are all too closely wedded to our own notions, and too hasty to undervalue and cavil at those of others. Therefore we ought to have a fellow-feeling for persons under either of the above-mentioned species of infirmity, and regard them only as a little further gone than ourselves in the common distemper incident to the human intellects.

Nor are they useless in the hand of Providence, but, like other evils, made to produce good fruits by balancing one another, and serving to keep the world in the middle road of sobriety and discretion by their opposite attractions. Perhaps our clergy would grow remiss in their duties, and quite careless of their flocks, if it were not for the danger of having them all enticed away by the indefatigable inveiglements of enthusiasts. Perhaps they would be rigid and authoritative, placing Religion wholly in speculative points, and giving out their own ingenious imaginations for the certain sense of the sacred records, if there were not the free-thinker ready at hand to demand a reason for all they assert, and catch them tripping whenever a moment off their guard. Nor is it unlikely that many of the laity have taken a distaste from the palpable absurdities of enthusiasts against that injudicious sanctity that leads into them; or have been put upon finding reasons for the faith that is in them, and taught to stand a joke, by being pestered with the scoffers; or drawn by the disputes bandied about to dis-

course of Religion, which else would have remained an unfashionable topic, never to be mentioned in good company.

But it becomes not us to encourage or countenance evil that good may come of it: the permission of evil is the prerogative of Heaven, who alone knows how to produce good therefrom: it is our part to acquiesce contentedly under what we cannot help, to use our endeavours towards remedying or lessening the evil so far as we can, provided we do not apply persecution, animosity, contempt, or other remedies worse than the disease, but especially to be careful the infection does not take hold on ourselves. For prejudice surrounds us on all quarters, and, in one shape or other, creeps upon us imperceptibly, nor perhaps is it possible totally to escape its influence. There are prejudices of education, prejudices of company and custom, prejudices of private opinion, prior determination, inclination, habit, novelty, interest, convenience, and dislike. Nothing so easy as to avoid Scylla by running upon Charybdis: this deceives both the bigot and freethinker; for, while they stand aghast with horror at the rocks upon which thers have been beaten, are themselves swallowed up in the whirlpool; and, in general, men are apt to place the whole of prudence in guarding against some striking folly observed in their neighbours. Being therefore apprized of our danger, we may see there is need enough of vigilance and circumspection; and what makes our steerage the more difficult is, that we are forced to employ the same gales for carrying us on our way that threaten us with destruction.

6. For without education, without deference to the authority and credit in the instructions of our tutors, we shall stick at the first entrance into knowledge: without regarding the opinions of others, we shall make no improvement beyond the pedantry of a college, without compliance with general customs, we shall attain no knowledge of the world, nor be of use to any other than ourselves, but must move each in a little sphere of his own, not as one of the society; without some steadiness in our own determinations, and adherence to the convictions of our reason, we shall be perpetually wavering, whiffle about with every wind, never know what discretion is, nor ever persevere in a regular course of conduct. Therefore we ought to give all these their proportionable weight upon us, not suffering any one to preponderate above the rest, nor exceed its due share in our estimation: wherein lies the main difficulty; for whoever does not wilfully shut his eyes may see they all deserve a proportion of our regard

For we must suppose men to use their understanding in what they teach and what they do, or at least to have followed others before them who did use it; therefore whatever is received that way has the sanction of their judgment on its side: on the other hand, it will hardly be denied, that whoever follows his leaders implicitly, or drives down with the torrent of custom, whether in matters of doctrine or practice, will inevitably run upon many pernicious errors and absurdities; whence comes the necessity of private judgment, and using our own eyes. Nevertheless, the general reception carries a just and strong presumption in its favour, not to be overcome unless upon positive and cogent evidence, nor without mature deliberation: for there may be an expedience found by long experience in things where the contrary appears upon a slight inspection, and in all courts of judgment the burden of the proof lies upon him who tenders the issue. In like manner, the decisions fixed in our mind, whether by instruction, example, or former exercises of our own reason, carry the like presumption, subject, ne-

vertheless, to be outweighed by further examination or experience; and the adherence to them, notwithstanding this counterweight, is termed either constancy or obstinacy, for both are the same quality of perseverance according as well or ill directed.

But in what particular cases this perseverance is a fault or a virtue, or when private judgment is to take place of authority or preconceived opinions, it may be impossible to lay down a rule for ascertaining precisely: nor were it expedient for the world that such rule could be found, for this would take away more than half the business of life. We should then proceed mechanically in the beaten track, having no use for our understanding, unless now and then at stated seasons, when our rule called upon us to exert it: but now we must keep our minds alert, having employment for all our faculties, as well to observe and consider as to execute, and while we pursue our track, must look before and around us upon objects as they occur, using our best discretion to prevent us from either deviating wantonly, or scrupling to shift our quarter when occasion shall require. We must expect to make some mistakes, but may avoid such as are pernicious and destructive; and I know of no better rule for lessening them than to apply all our means of information, whether those received from others, or gotten by our own sagacity and industry, for balancing and correcting one another, and to beware constantly of the bias of passion; for this it is that always cramps the thought, and renders us narrow-minded.

7. We have already shown the dangers of vanity and self-conceit, whether of being able to refine upon our teachers, or to lay open their utter ignorance: but these are not the only passions that destroy our freedom, they drive us forcibly into a licentiousness of thought, whereas others operate by restraint; but perfect freedom cannot be enjoyed without total exemption both from force and restraint. The shackles cast upon the mind may come from zeal for imbibed principles, scrupulous fear of doing wrong, shame of appearing singular, softness to receive impression from importunity and positive assertions, pliancy to custom, inveteracy of habit, indolence of temper averse to the trouble of examination, hasty determination a natural consequence of the former, veneration or dislike of particular persons, interest, party, and private inclination. All which frequently prove grievous hindrances to the progress of our reasonings, and yet some of these restraints are necessary to balance one another, to keep us steady in a good course, or drive us out of a bad one, so that we may find it needful to call in their aid sometimes for our self-defence: like the garrison of a fortress, who, while the enemy scours the field, are forced to imprison themselves within their walls in order to secure their liberty. Well were it if we could always distinguish the friend from the enemy, that we might take to our fastnesses, whenever passion is abroad, but open our barriers to calm and sober reason.

But this is a science very hard to be learned; for passion so commonly marches under the colours and in the uniform of reason, or makes her approaches so covertly by the sap and the mine, or by her magic glass of falsehood casts such shades upon her adversary, that we frequently mistake the one for the other. Therefore it is incumbent upon us diligently to study her manner and motions, to listen for the subterraneous thumps of the miner's spade and pickaxe, and carefully remark in what particular quarters she is most apt to assail us: for by use and practice we may become more and more aware of all her wiles, which must enlarge our range of freedom; because having learned to know when the coast is clear, we may sally out

boldly to forage for new discoveries in the field of contemplation, without danger of an ambuscade.

But there is a particular fear that fetters the mind grievously when entering upon topics of Religion: some are so afraid of departing from the faith, that they will not depart from error or prejudice, whenever imposed upon them as an article of faith. This shuts out all means of information or amendment: with such a bar against them neither the Jew nor the Gentile could ever have been converted, the Papists reformed, nor the Enthusiast restored to his senses. We do not deny that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but will never bring it to perfection: our reverence and awe we ought never to lay aside, no not for a moment, for in him we live, move, and have our being; on his power we depend both in body and soul, and in our obedience to his declared Will consists our happiness. But he requires not of us a slavish fear, for his service is perfect freedom in all senses, as well when we serve him with his talent of understanding, as with the active powers he has given us: nor shall we run less hazard of offending him by wrapping it up in a napkin, than by any involuntary mistakes it may lead us into.

8. This servile fear often dashes men upon the very rocks of offence they were apprehensive of: for it makes them think hardly of God as of a rigorous taskmaster; it represents him as giving arbitrary commands on supposition that such may magnify his authority: it pins them down to the letter without regarding the intention; attaches them to forms and ceremonies, not daring to penetrate into the substance: it draws them to imagine their help necessary to defend his glory and resist his enemies; it drives them into censoriousness, derision, animosity, and other kinds of persecution, under pain of forfeiting their allegiance, until the zeal of the Lord's house hath eaten them up: it overwhelms them with scruples, misgivings, terrors, and desperations; lays them open to credulity in dreams, omens, judgments, and supernatural events; debars them the use of their understanding as a presumption and profaneness, and leads them to flatter God with perfections not belonging to him.

This last may seem an inadmissible paradox; for what flattery can there be of a Being who is the sum and fountain of all perfection? But when we reflect how prone men of narrow views are to take their own errors and weaknesses for excellencies, it will appear not so strange that an over-timorous zeal for the divine glory should ascribe such excellencies to him, which he has not: and this is a gross flattery, for which he will not think the better of them. It is this induces them to imagine him having his peculiar favourites, because friendship is a virtue in themselves, to distribute or withhold his mercies without other reason than his own good pleasure, because they esteem it a right to bestow their favours where they please without being asked a reason; this sets men against an universal Providence, lest they should contaminate his Purity and his Majesty, by allowing him any forethought of foul and trivial things; gives course to the doctrine of a Freewill of indifference and absolute contingency of human action, lest he should be thought the author of sin; prevents all impartial examination into the proper idea of infinite goodness, that Attribute which of all others is perhaps the hardest and yet the most interesting for us to understand, for fear the little perplexities occasioned by the scantiness of our faculties should be taken for a mistrust of it, and has carried some divines so far as to prove, that God is good to those whom he damns eternally, because he preserves them in

existence; never reflecting that Being without well-being is no kindness, and with perpetual torment is an intolerable burden, which according to our clearest ideas it would be a mercy to take off. But this sophism is needless, because we may satisfy ourselves without it: that God is good I both see and believe: that he is infinitely good I believe though I do not see it; for I am too conscious of the darkness of my understanding, to think myself warranted to reject everything that I fail of seeing; therefore to persuade myself that I see it when I do not, because I fancy it will please, is no better than arrant flattery. For my part, the most pleasing thing to the Searcher of hearts seems to me to be a strict examination of my errors and ignorance, with a reliance on his Providence for dispelling such of them as he judges proper: and if I have any other heresy I should wish to know it, as the most likely step to put me in the way of obtaining a cure.

9. But fear is the beginning of wisdom, therefore to be kept as a necessary guard upon the learner, until he has gotten a competent command of his imagination; for that roving faculty is apt to throw up wanton, fantastical, irreverent, mistrustful, desponding, gloomy, perplexing ideas, which have been catched by sympathy from the company of giddy, sanguine, or melancholy persons. These imaginations ought all to be banished instantly as soon as they offer to intrude, nor should he be less afraid of his own fears that start up at seasons from indigestion, disappointment, ill-humour, or bodily distemperature: a little observation will discover them by their changeable quality, ebbing and flowing by fits, and teach him to pay them no regard until he has had leisure to revise them in lucid intervals. The like caution will serve against very striking fancies that dart suddenly with the force of self-evident truths, but are often found hollow upon a second view, or a close and calm examination. The urgency of appetite too, the impetuosity of desire, the avocations of pleasure, are no otherwise to be restrained, nor the lethargy of indolence roused, than by alarming him with terrors. But after these troublesome enemies are tolerably brought under, still to retain the same degree of terror would be bad policy: for then it becomes vicious, tending only to obstruct the operations of the understanding.

So that fear, like other medicines, is either salutary or pernicious according to the subjects whereto it is applied, and ought not to be given in extremes nor administered without good knowledge of the patient, and due consideration of the case. The bigot would fill everybody with fears, though he has none himself, nor even caution, or proper reverence where most justly due. The freethinker would banish all fear and caution, and reverence along with it, and would emancipate the world in the same manner as an apprentice is emancipated by running away from his master: but the only desirable emancipation is that attained by having served his time and learned his trade. Freedom of thought must be acknowledged an edged tool, necessary to the artificer as he cannot do his work cleverly without it, but extremely dangerous to be played with by the novice: it must be handled gingerly at first, or we shall run a hazard of cutting ourselves, or other folks who have the misfortune to stand within our reach; nor must it ever be brandished about wantonly or heedlessly, for the oldest workmen have been known sometimes to do themselves a mischief. As there is a similtitude in liberty of all kinds, we may gather some profitable instruction by observing wherein freedom of conversation and carriage consists: not in utter contempt of all rules and decency, but a thorough understanding and habitual expertness in them.

The well-bred gentleman behaves easily in all companies, is never at a loss how to deport himself, can speak his mind freely, and maintain his just rights upon occasion, yet without failing a whit of the respect or reverence due to any present; and can utter bold truths even to ladies without breach of good manners, on giving the least offence. Bring an unlicked cub into company, and you will find him shy and sheepish, never knowing when to sit or stand, uneasy in all situations; he dares not say his soul is his own, assents if you tell him black is white, and if a lord asks him what 's o'clock, thinks it high treason to answer. Set him loose at once from his fears, and you may make him directly a freethinker in behaviour, he talks loudly and pertly upon all subjects, contradicts and criticises, and jostles anybody, puts the women to the blush with his smutty jokes and rude jeers, is positive and tenacious in trifles, and thinks himself as good as the best man in the kingdom. If he chance to have a volubility of pen, he entertains the public weekly with calumniating the great; if a slender ray of Parnassus, he cuts and slashes in satire, not against vices and follies, but against particular persons marked out by the populace for hunted deer; no matter for plan or moral; one or two of Horace's purple rags botched together with coarse seams of abuse will gain prodigious applause among the many: if a topping influence in a borough, he moves for presents of gold boxes, not so much to give pleasure to the persons receiving, as because he thinks it will vex some others: if a smattering in Philosophy, he runs off a treatise against miracles or prophecies, or manfully defends the natural rights of mankind, against attempts made upon them by the hierarchy some two or three centuries ago; if of divinity, he shows the clergy know nothing of their business, nor are half strict enough, but lays out certain methods of practice and articles of faith never heard of before, as indispensably necessary to salvation.

Thus we see in all cases how freedom proves a dangerous instrument in undisciplined hands, that the management of it is a peculiar art not to be learned without careful application and experience, nor practised without cool circumspection and reserve; that apprehensions are not to be cast off at once, but suffered to subside by degrees in proportion as the scholar advances in proficiency, nor can ever be totally discarded without imminent danger of mischief.

10. Since then it appears so very difficult to run currently along the straight line of liberty without stepping aside into servility or licentiousness, it behoves us to seek for what dispositions of mind may guide the feet aright by keeping the eye steady upon its proper point. As precipitancy and passion, especially vanity, are the greatest misleaders, it is obvious that a reservation for second thoughts, a quiet coolness, a modesty and humility of temper, are the safest preservatives, nor can there be thorough freedom without them: for whenever a man undertakes to demonstrate his opponent in the wrong, or run him down with reproaches, you may pronounce him under an intemperance of mind that does not leave him perfect master of his thoughts.

From this rule of sobriety and humility spring several branches: first, a decent deference to authority without an implicit faith, and a candid construction of opinions however singular: for one can not suppose men embrace errors knowingly, but take them in a lump as appearing connected with something just and solid, or are led into particular errors by some specious resemblance of truth. Therefore candour will incline us to examine the several parts of a system, with a persuasion of finding something tenable in the bundle; and is never so well satisfied with its judgment of a mistake,

as when it can discover the fallacy that might easily mislead a well-intentioned person thereinto.

Next, an unbiassed equity, unsolicitous to give triumph or vexation to any man, or set of men, having no favourites, or rather bearing an equal favour to all, agreeable to that saying of Tully we have often seen quoted, I am a friend to Plato, a friend to Socrates, but more a friend to truth: and ready to give everything its due. This equitable temper will render the possessor averse to opposition and contradiction so far as can possibly be avoided, pleased with none other contention than that of brotherly love and good offices, labouring at reconcilement in part, if it cannot be effected entirely, studious to save the credit of an antagonist, careful to give no offence to the unwary, and aiming always at the general good. It prompts to regard the use and end of things, their tendencies as well as their intrinsic value; to distinguish between the form and the substance: to discern what is essential, and what only a barrier to protect the former, or an expedient to lead into it: endeavouring so to accommodate the road for the passage of different travellers, that they may proceed without interfering or jostling, as perceiving that the several tracts of it may terminate in the same journey's end.

Thirdly, a temperance of imagination not to be seduced by the charms of novelty, nor thrown off the hinges by any striking discovery or shining observation, regarding real use preferably to every other object, capable when necessity will permit of suppressing whatever might offend the weak, or scandalize the scrupulous, or be misunderstood so as to appear subversive of more important truths; herein practising that which the great master of eloquence, in his three dialogues upon that art, lays down for one of the first rules to be observed by an orator, That he be careful to let nothing drop which might do hurt to his cause.

Lastly, what in a former chapter we have called the science of ignorance or knowledge of what we cannot do, which will withhold the professor from driving at all lengths, whether with a probability of attaining them or no, or entering upon topics where he can hope to add nothing to what was known to everybody before; in example of the true poet, who, as described by Horace, examines the strength of his shoulders, what they are able to bear, and what they would sink under, and when meeting with a subject he despairs of ever bringing to a good polish, he prudently passes it over.

With these defences, which may be termed the Panoply of Liberty, I shall endeavour to arm myself against dangers, and though I cannot pretend to escape them all, but no doubt shall be found sometimes to maintain an error, or pursue an argument that had better have been omitted; yet when it is considered what precautions I have taken, I shall hope to stand acquitted of ill design or heedlessness: as for involuntary slips, it is not in mortal man to avoid them, especially in such rugged and slippery paths as I shall be obliged to pass along. But since we have found vanity the most formidable enemy, which yet is but an excrescence from the desire of commendation, that life and vigour of virtue and all manly performances; it seems expedient, before I proceed onward, to bestow a Chapter upon it, in order to give it a thorough examination, that we may always know the excrescence from the genuine branches.

CHAP. IX.

VANITY.

But how shall we manage to pursue our examination effectually? where find the scales nice enough to weigh a bubble, or get a needle fine enough to pick up a vapour, that we may turn it about for our inspection on all sides, so as to discern exactly its make and colours? We can all see vanity at a distance with a striking plainness; it is like the clouds gathered in a body, whose tinselled edges glitter in the western Sun; but who can see the vapours drawn up by his meridian beams to form those clouds, though standing in the middle of the stream that flows copiously around him? So that other vapour, which surrounds us always like an atmosphere wherever we go, eludes our sight by its nearness. It lies too close to the eye to be discerned, too flat upon the skin to be taken hold of; it insinuates among our pores, mingles among our vital juices, trips along the tongue, dances upon the eyes, trepidates through the nerves, wantons in the gestures, lurks among the sentiments, taints the imagination, and runs throughout the whole constitution; insomuch that it has been generally thought innate, as an essential part of the human composition.

But though nature will not own the monstrous birth, it must be acknowledged one of the earliest of our acquisitions, which being bred in the bone will never go out of the flesh: for we suck it in with our milk, imbibe it from our parents, catch it from our playfellows, are enticed into it by our self-love, encouraged to it by the world, and confirmed in it by the general practice: so that education, sympathy, and example all combining to rivet it in us, it is no wonder it grows into an inveterate habit, giving birth to most of our latent motives, operating upon us imperceptibly, and so perpetually entering the scale of judgment, as scarce to be distinguished from the other weights. For by its pervading quality infusing itself into them all, it can skulk under a thousand disguises, and Proteus like assume a thousand various forms, taking away the similitude of whatever covering it lies under. One never knows where to have it sure: if you mortify it in one shape, it gathers new life in another; if you weed it effectually out of one spot, it instantly sprouts up in the opposite quarter behind you: so that with all the pains you can take, your work is never ended, nor your vigilance allowed a moment's respite.

Vanity is given to children with their playthings, and taught them with their instructions: they are made to show about their little toys, to angle for everybody's admiration at their prettiness, and bid to be mannerly by way of setting themselves above the dirty beggar boys in the street. In youth the fancy runs upon peculiar advantages possessed above others, whether bodily strength, sagacity in outwitting, handsomeness of person, or finery of dress, luxuriates in affectation of all trifling kinds, and renders the school they were bred up in, the way of life they have been accustomed to, or little accomplishment they chance to have succeeded in, infinitely preferable to every thing else in the world besides. In manhood there are riches, or family, or favour of the great, or magnificence in buildings, or equipage and all the pride of life, administering fuel to vanity: the desire

of excelling actuates all, and in the consciousness of it they place their prime delight: every one has something belonging to him better than his neighbours, and does something in a cleverer manner than anybody else; and to make his superiority the surer, despises every other accomplishment wherein he cannot shine eminently himself. If the gifts of fortune are shown an insufficient ground for a man to value himself upon, he will assume a title from those of nature, from the endowments of the mind, from learning, good breeding, or other proficiency: if driven out of this claim too, he may be vain of his virtues, or mistake his eagerness to outstrip for a zeal to make the greatest proficiency he can in them.

This passion operates where one would least expect it, sets up the mechanic for a judge over judges, qualifies the common councilman to dictate measures of state, serves for inspiration to the enthusiast, supports the methodist under his incessant labours, and reigns in triumph over the free-thinker. The wily sorceress contrives means to nestle in the bosom of Religion, works hollow passages under the solid ground of Philosophy, and finds a crevice to slip through into treatises on humility. Perhaps a tincture may have infused itself unperceived into this very page, under the specious appearance of relieving the Reader that he may return with fresh spirits to drier disquisitions; or the glittering sand of ornament been strewed, not so much to set off the subject, as by a secret impulse prompting to set off the operator.

2. But though I will not undertake to pronounce assuredly in all cases what is vanity and what is not, yet where one can perceive the water muddied by something wriggling under it, I shall try my best to catch hold on the slippery eel; that I may apply her to the microscope to examine her carefully, and discover the slender threads that are the spawn by which she multiplies. I am not unapprized that ambition of all kinds, from that of the statesman down to the fiddler, and Pride are distinguishable from vanity: the first being a greediness of acquiring superiority, the second a fond contemplation of that we have, and the last a like fond humour of showing it. But since unnecessary distinctions tend only to burden the mind, and I see no occasion for them here, I shall comprehend all three under the one term by which I have entitled this chapter; as they all spring from one common principle, the love of excelling others.

It may be remembered that satisfaction is the magnet directing every turn of our volition, the solid substance giving weight to all our motives; nature at our birth has annexed satisfaction to certain sensations, as of taste, or warmth, or rest, or little motions of the limbs, and at first we receive none other than what come by their conveyance. But very soon ideas of reflection make a lodgement in the infant mind, beginning the stores of experience there, and form the faculty of imagination, by means of which the apprehension of absent pleasures becomes immediately pleasing: whence grow the appetites currently counted natural, and supposed to be born with us. But then those ideas only are pleasing in the apprehension whose archetypes were so in the sensation, for appetite prompts to nothing but what has afforded satisfaction when applied to the senses: which proves those ideas to have no intrinsic goodness in themselves, because deriving their attractive quality from the action of external objects.

As the little stock of experience increases and imagination gets a larger field to play in, striking out new assemblages and trains not worked by the senses, there sprout up other appetites from that of pleasure: these are styled natural too, and with no great impropriety, because flourishing more

or less in every soil universally, and appearing very early without any cultivation, they are the product of custom, our second nature. For I have endeavoured to show in the chapters of my first volume upon the four classes of motives, how use grows from pleasure, and honour from use by translation; for being first found satisfactory as a means conducive to their respective end, in process of time the end drops out of thought, and then satisfaction becomes completely translated to the means, resting upon it as an end without intervention of any other. Hence it appears that honour, however propagated among individuals by sympathy, derives its origin and receives its value immediately from use, but remotely from pleasure; that nothing is laudable in itself, nor otherwise, than as conducive to happiness, which constitutes the real essence of rectitude, how much soever honour may be our proper mark whereby to discern it; and that commendation is there more justly due where it may be most usefully applied.

3. This appetite towards approbation, whether from other persons or from our own mind, does, like other appetites, give an immediate pleasure in the gratification or the means tending thereto; and sometimes to the bare prospect of objects proper to gratify it, though lying out of our reach: as a basket of delicious fruits, though not beautiful to the eye, may please the sight without our wanting to eat of them. Such pleasures are of the mental kind, not the sensitive, having no dependence upon the senses, but seated wholly in the reflection: unless you will call them internal sensations excited by the play of ideas in the reflexive faculty, whose operations in some cases are styled notices of the moral sense, distinguishing between objects agreeable or disagreeable instantaneously, as the eye distinguishes colours.

This property of the moral sense misled the Stoics to place the essence of rectitude in the agreeableness discerned thereby: for they insisted that virtue was its own reward and good in itself, because the exercise of it is attended with a soothing complacence of mind, and because actions were acknowledged to be right, although manifestly tending to our own damage, or that of others: therefore the το καλον or honestum or beauty of things discerned by the moral sense, constituted their whole goodness; and that nothing was good nor contributed a whit to happiness besides rectitude of sentiment and conduct. Whereas a little reflection may convince us, that rectitude is so far from being good in itself or the sole good, that it would have no goodness at all, nor even a being, if there were nothing else good, whereto it might conduce. Were it in my power to rescue a worthy family from some imminent danger or utter ruin, why should I think it right to do so, unless some benefit would accrue to them therefrom? their incurring the mischief would be no fault in them, nor their escaping a virtue, but a piece of good fortune: therefore if this escape were no good, nor contributed anything to their happiness, it would be just as right for me to withhold, as to give my assistance. And the like may be said of every other act we perform, if it does not tend nearly or remotely to some enjoyment the reception whereof is no virtue, we might full as well, as rightly, and as commendably let it alone.

Well, but suppose I had bestirred myself to the utmost in warding off the mischief, though without the least success; still everybody would acknowledge I had done right and applauded me for my good intention, though of no avail to the parties: why so I hope they would, because I should do the same by them upon the like occasion; but let us consider upon what grounds I should judge this approbation due, namely, because a stre-

nuous act of kindness indicates and strengthens a benevolent disposition of mind which may have better success another time, and helps to encourage it by example or sympathy in others who will have opportunities of becoming more serviceable thereby to their fellow-creatures. Thus commendation becomes due to right action, because useful in stimulating to future right actions of like beneficial tendency; and for this reason alone, does not at all depend upon the present success, nor for any intrinsic goodness in the deed abstracted from its good effects.

Then for placing the value of virtue solely in the complacence accompanying the practice, this would make it a narrow, selfish principle; for then I am to do a good act, not for the good that may redound to anybody therefrom, nor even for my own future profit, but for my present amusement to please myself with the performance. Besides that complacence is to be found in other practices; the child can find it in his plays, the school-boy in his exercises, the miser in his gainful schemes, and the villain in his cunning tricks: so that if present complacence made the goodness of things, there would be none other difference between virtue and trifle or roguery, than that it happens to hit the fancy. Thus it appears in all lights, that the true value of rectitude does not lie in an inherent beauty striking the moral sense, but derives from a reference to something else that is not virtue. Nevertheless, our moral sense, generated by our own experience of things we have forgotten, or conveyed by instruction and sympathy from others upon our experience we never had, may prove an excellent guide, not safely to be neglected, for directing us into measures having a tendency to happiness, too remote or too intricate for us to discern.

4. The pleasure arising from the three scenes of reflection before spoken of seems to be the same in kind, differing no otherwise than in the objects affording it: for the state of mind and inward feel of the proud man, when reflecting on his excellencies, varies nothing from that of the voluptuary contemplating the exquisite dainties he is going to sit down to, or, the covetous man when ruminating on the treasures he has gotten: each being none other than joy taken in the possession of something esteemed desirable. If I were to hazard a physical account of this matter, I should conjecture there was some little fibre of the mental organization, whose play had a quality of striking the joyous perception, or, as we vulgarly say, tickling the fancy. Joy, when occasioned by the contrast of very dissimilar objects, along which it proceeds by continual leaps and bounds from one to the other, becomes mirth: whence some have profoundly maintained, that laughter proceeds always from contempt, or a comparison of ourselves with something greatly our inferior: from which doctrine it would follow, as Addison observes, that, instead of saying such a one is a very merry man, we ought to say he is a very proud man.

But there is another inference many times drawn in sober seriousness therefrom, namely, that ridicule is the touchstone of falsehood, because whatever excites our laughter must needs be contemptible and absurd: and if we object that the best of things have often been turned into jest, we are answered that whoever does this makes himself ridiculous, and not the things he jokes upon. I shall not repeat what I have urged in the chapter on the passions to show, both that contempt does not always produce laughter, and that laughter flows from several other sources: I need only observe here, that the provocation to mirth, even where it does arise from contempt, is a very unsafe evidence to trust to; for it is well known the

prejudice of vanity will sometimes weigh down persons, and actions, and qualities in our estimation, that were really far above our own, so as to make us triumph where he had more reason to be mortified: and witty burlesques of the noblest performances have, in the eyes of many people, carried off all the admiration belonging to them; or if this does not happen, one may laugh heartily at Virgil travestie, without either despising Cotton, or abating one's admiration of Virgil. The touchstone of ridicule was probably introduced into the present century by mistaking my Lord Shaftesbury, whom I should understand to recommend ridicule, not so much as a means of making discoveries yourself, as of prevailing upon other people, and a surer method of eradicating popular delusions than persecution: agreeably with what Horace had laid down long before, That humour for the most part cuts short great disputes more effectually and better than acrimony; yet both are an address to the passions, not to the understanding.

If there be a particular fibre exciting joy in the mind, it never begins to play until put in motion by some of those exhibiting our other ideas of reflection; and may be brought gradually to connect with any of them upon successive alterations in our texture, made by their working in among one another until they come into contact with it: by which process I conceive translation effected, the pleasurable object drawing in the means of attaining it, until in time they touch the joy-exciting spring, and then, slipping from between the means, become immediately pleasurable in themselves.—However this be, nobody can doubt that different objects give joy in the reflection to different persons, and are made to do so by education, example, custom, and other external causes: nor that they may successively change their quality in the same person, for he that was fond of pleasures may now become fond of gain, and afterwards prefer honour incomparably before both.

5. The sense of honour, and calm but soothing joy, springing from self-approbation, or the consciousness of rectitude in our proceedings, is perhaps the most useful and valuable acquisition of mind we can make: without a competent share of this appetite, our life would pass insipid, our conduct resemble that of brutes: we should not act as members of society, though living in it, but could be kept in order only by dread of punishment, nor ever become qualified for liberty. It is this makes the greatest part of our enjoyment, for pleasures fall rarely in our way; and if we follow them closely, quickly satiate and become insipid, and use will not supply us with constant employment, for we cannot always find opportunities of pursuing our advantages; and when we do, though the view of benefit may put us upon the task, yet the reflection of acting right carries us through the several steps for completing it. The tradesman and mechanic, driven into their professions for a livelihood, nevertheless are actuated therein as much by a regard to their credit and the commendableness of industry, as by a thought of the profit they are making; or, if they want these motives, presently grow idle, and neglect their business.

The enjoyment distilling from this source is sure and sincere, unmingled with dregs and unproductive of future inconvenience: for disappointment works no change in the colour of our actions, and involuntary mistake leaves no regret behind, but brings a healing salve, in the circumstance of its being involuntary, for the hurts it may lead into. Neither is it liable to be stopped by accidents, because depending wholly upon ourselves, not upon externals as pleasure and profit do; nor to be dried up by sickness or age, for the di

eased and infirm still have something to do in bearing and easing their burdens, and even seasons of utter inability leave room for the comfortable retrospect of a former conduct. Therefore it is well worth our while to cultivate an habitual taste for this pleasure, which will never fail nor deceive us. The stoical doctrine was so far right, as that if a man could always have his judgment clear and his inclination strongly set upon following it invariably, he would always be happy.

This habit supplies the deficiency of our views, and conducts to many benefits we know nothing of: for had we always a clear insight into the whole result of our measures, and a lively present apprehension of the pleasures to be compassed by them, we should want nothing more either to direct us in the choice, or quicken our alacrity in pursuit of them. Therefore I have hinted in a former place, that it is possible the perfect spirits of the invisible world may have no virtues belonging to them because needing none: for if their intelligence be so extensive as to reach all the minutest consequences of every action offering to their choice, and their judgment so just as that distant enjoyment weighs equally with the present, they will constantly pursue the road of happiness without any other motive to influence them. To call off their attention to any rule of rectitude would be, if not doing a disservice, at least superfluous: for they will always do what is right for the apparent benefit of it, without other mark to direct their choice, or spur of self-approbation to urge on their activity.

But this manner of procedure I conceive is not virtue, for I can agree once more with the Stoics in laying down, that virtue loses her essence unless embraced purely for her own sake upon account of her beauty, in apprehension of her being a good in herself without reference to pleasure or profit, or any other object beyond the very act of performance. Many things may be right wherein she has no further concern than to see they are innocent, and not contrary to her interests: if a man leaves a shop, because he has found another where he can be supplied with better wares; if he relieves the honest necessitous poor in a borough, to serve his interests by the credit of it at an ensuing election, he certainly does right, but it is no virtue, because not done upon a motive of rectitude.

But how spacious a range of understanding soever there may be in the other world, we are certain it lies confined within a very narrow compass in this; we do not always know what will be wanted for our pleasures, so are forced to be taught a desire of profit, which urges to lay in a stock of useful things, without discerning what particular pleasures they will yield. And our uses often lie so remote, and require such a long train of various preparations to provide for them, that we very rarely know which way to turn ourselves, so as shall prove most advantageous to our interests. All that can be done is to form rules upon our own experience, or take them from the experience of others; and having gotten a full confidence in our rules, to follow them upon a general persuasion of their rectitude, without knowing or without seeing why they were right: or if they clash, to determine the preference between them by an intuitive view of their respective beauty and rectitude; intuitive not of their essence and nature, but of the records impressed in our mind, which may possibly have been falsified, yet are the only guide we have; whom if we neglect, we shall never work out other advantages than those lying from time to time just before our feet.

And where we do discern our distant pleasures and uses most plainly, yet the rust of indolence is apt to hinder the balance from turning with

them, or some present desire magnified by the nearness of its object, to outweigh them; so that if there be any trouble or self-denial lying across the way, we cannot pursue them. For it has been found upon examination of human nature in the first volume, that present satisfaction is the motive which constantly influences us in all our actions: and that distant good never moves us unless there be an appetite urging towards it, whose present gratification, or uneasiness upon being thwarted, is strong enough to counterpoise every other desire. So we must be bribed to work out future advantages by satisfaction continually given in hand during the pursuit of them.

Now the charms of rectitude and sweets of self-approbation, in proportion to the sensibility we have of them, will best supply this continual satisfaction; profit and other inclinations may afford it copiously enough sometimes, but then they flow unequally by uncertain tides, only when opportunity serves, or the humour sets in strongly; and often stir up an activity worse than indolence, as leading into cruel disappointments, and grievous mischief. Whereas the satisfaction springing from a conscientiousness of well-doing flows with an even, uninterrupted motion, checks the exorbitances and wanderings of other desires, and when rising in any competent degree, renders the conduct uniform, regular, prudent, profitable to the practiser, and beneficial wherever else there is room to be so.

Not but this stream has its tides too, nevertheless they do not depend upon the wind and weather of humour and accidental allurements, but upon the occasion requiring more vigorous efforts, upon the load of obstruction to be removed by them, and when rising high are capable of removing mountains. For experience testifies, that a sense of honour and the comforts of a good conscience have carried men through toils and labours, self-denials and dangers; supported them under misfortunes, afflictions, and distresses; enabled them to bear hunger and thirst, pain and poverty, disappointment and injury, oppression and slavery: to sacrifice life itself with its most favourite advantages; and to perform wonders one could scarce have thought possible to human nature. This principle, though valuable in all, yet more especially deserves cultivation in persons of large abilities and high stations, to set them above private interest and vulgar passions, to make their talents extensively useful, nor can any great work, affecting the interests of multitudes, be achieved without it.

6. But there is a false honour, the object of a depraved appetite, almost as pernicious as the other is beneficial; I say almost, because like other evils it many times by chance brings forth excellent fruits, whereas the genuine never did hurt to the owner, and very rarely to anybody else, nor unless misguided by unavoidable mistake. Now, in order to know them apart, let us observe that natural appetite in its perfect state prompts only to wholesome foods: but when depraved, hankers after such as are unwholesome and frothy, which hurt the constitution, or at least afford no nourishment. In like manner it has been found among our former inquiries, that honour grows from use, as that does from pleasure, and is there most deservedly belonging where it may be most usefully applied. But it cannot be usefully applied unless the object whereon it fixes be useful, that is, productive of happiness: with this only difference between the natural and moral appetites, that the former excite to our own sustenance alone, whereas the latter extend to things that promote happiness anywhere. And the reason of the difference is obvious, because the victuals eaten by another can contribute nothing towards nourishing me, but the Attribute of Equity

insures me a proportionable share in all the enjoyment I can procure for another.

Yet though the object be useful, the appetite may not always be so; if immoderate, or needless, or ill-timed, so as to spend itself in idle reflections when it ought to be spurring on to action: in all these cases, whether of being turned upon wrong objects, or wrongfully applied, it degenerates into vanity. For if honour prompt to things mischievous or trifling, to revenge, to contention, to pulling down a rival, to contempt of application and industry, or to finery, to fantastic airs, to skill in diverting tricks or harmless plays, it is misplaced; if it so engross the man as that he cannot stoop to common business, nor do anything unless for the sake of shining, it is immoderate; if upon having usefully spurred on the learner to acquire valuable accomplishments, it still continues to stimulate after they are become habitual and easy, and he can go on currently without a spur, it is needless; and if it amuse him with the retrospect of what has been bravely done, while there is work lying at hand that wants further dispatch, it is ill-timed and unseasonable: in all which instances it is the working of a vitiated and depraved habit.

7. There is scarce anything harder in the whole science of human nature and morality than to settle the proper point of honour, or to draw the exact line separating the true from the false. I find the difficulty rise upon me the further I enter into my subject; for while we keep in generals it was easy to see that honour is there most deservedly placed, where it will be most useful; and that a just sentiment of it will incline the possessor always to pursue what is right in preference to present pleasure, or ease, or profit, or allurement of any passion whatever; but when we come to particularize the points whereto this sentiment ought to direct, it seems as impossible a task, as that mentioned in the fable of making a suit of clothes to fit the moon, who changes her shape every night. For honour bearing a reference to use must necessarily correspond with the variations found in that; but the professions and stations of men are so various, that whatever course of conduct you fix upon as most laudable for one, will be found of little avail for the next.

The soldier places his point of honour in fidelity and contempt of danger, and he does right, because these qualities render him serviceable in his profession: the merchant has no personal dangers to encounter, nor command of his prince to execute, so he may be cowardly and grumble at public measures without much inconvenience, but he values himself upon punctuality in his payments, and acquitting himself skilfully of his commissions: the common labourer has no payments to make nor correspondents to satisfy, so it is best that he should value himself upon doing the work well he is hired to, without loitering or purloining anything. Perhaps there are none utterly destitute of a sentiment of honour, which if so misplaced as to prove detrimental to them, may yet have been highly beneficial to persons in a different situation from whom they copied it. So I shall not undertake to canvass this delicate subject completely, as being past my skill, but only to gather such observations and explanations occurring to me, as may help to give us a little insight into the nature of it, yet without confidence of their being always exactly just: and to form some rules of determining our judgment, which nevertheless admit of large exceptions, according to the particular cases whereto they may be applied.

8. Honour first rises out of use in our early childhood, by means of that advantage found in the help and encouragement given by persons about

us according to our behaviour, until having run frequently in that track it becomes translated to the behaviour itself; so that children can applaud or take shame to themselves in secret for things they do not apprehend will ever be known: and thus I conceive the appetite giving self-complacence or compunction generated. As they grow up, they cannot long fail of observing that riches, title, rank, magnificence, bodily advantages, natural talents of the mind, and improvements made from either, are esteemed subjects of admiration and applause; whence by the like progress as before, they learn a self-approbation in whatever of these they possess, and in any advances made towards them. In process of time they find, or are told, if they have luck to fall under good guidance, that the possession of these things is for the most part wholly and always partly owing to fortune, upon whom their self-approbation has no effect to make it better or worse: which therefore deservedly belongs only to their own actions, and the sentiments of mind that may influence them aright in the application of such powers and opportunities as fall to their lot.

By further observation or instruction they learn that applause is sometimes diversely and contrarily bestowed, that the objects of common admiration have not always that efficacy to insure happiness as imagined, and that the pursuit of them often leads into inconveniences greater than their value when attained. This puts them upon judging for themselves upon the value of things independently on the general estimation: but finding that passion or secret propensities are apt to warp the judgment, or prevent its influence upon the conduct when clearest, they must perceive that an unbiassed judgment, and a ready disposition to act in pursuance of it, are the best acquisitions they can make: because in proportion as they can attain these, all other good things attainable will follow of course. Thus the seat of true honour lies wholly in our own sentiments and actions, and the fruits of it are that self-approbation and complacence of mind arising from the consciousness of having judged impartially upon the best lights the occasion would afford, and conducted ourselves accordingly without failure or deviation. The judgment may err, but this makes no alteration in the state of mind: passion and prejudice will often slip in unawares to mislead us, but can never do it so privately, as to escape the consciousness of something passing amiss, which then changes the complacence into compunction.

But when I place the essence of the Honestum, or laudable, solely in the rectitude of our sentiments or measures, as the proper ground of self-approbation, without regard to the success, or to externals, or other people's estimation, I must subjoin a caution or two, to prevent my being misapprehended as giving in to the stoical extravagancies. First, let us call to mind that there are other complacencies besides that of self-approbation: if a man be hungry on a journey, and find a commodious inn, he feels a complacence in the sight of it: so he does in the preparations making by the people of the house for his dinner, in possession of the victuals when brought upon the table, in carving and eating them: but here is no self-applause in all this. Or if he were in pursuit of some particular preferment, and is told the minister in whose disposal it lies has received a very advantageous character of him, I suppose he will find the news very complacent to his hearing: and so it may well be, without making him think the higher of his merits for what his friend has said, or his patron believed of them. In like manner there is a complacence in the possession of estate, rank, credit, reputation, sagacity, learning, and the advances making towards them: and this complacence is no blemish in the character, for

happiness is the proper business of life, and every innocent pleasure or gratification of desire is so much accession to happiness: yet are they no subjects of self-applause, nor need a man value himself upon being happy or having the means of enjoyment in his power; for the complacence of self-approbation is a distinct species from that arising from pleasure or profit and if engrafted upon them, will degenerate into arrant vanity. So a man may justifiably rejoice in externals, or whatever is the subject of general estimation, and pursue them, so he does it consistently with the rules of prudence and moderation, as things pleasurable or useful, not as laudable.

The next caution I would throw in is, that, by drawing our complacence solely from our own judgment and adherence thereto, I be not understood to require an utter contempt of the practices and opinions of the world, for this would rather encourage vanity than avoid it; the observation of what others think and do, is one necessary means of informing our own judgment, and, in matters of form and ceremony, that is commonly right which is most generally received: the judgment of others may justly give a sanction to our own, or even direct it where we have no better lights, yet still it ought to operate by way of conviction or information, not of impulse, like a torrent driving us before it. He that has not constancy to withstand the stream of custom when his clear judgment directs the contrary way, or has not compliance enough to give up any fond humour of his own for the general convenience, will never persevere steadily in a laudable course, bending with the solid banks, but forcing the crowded reeds to bend under it. What are the exact measures both of constancy and compliance lies beyond my skill to ascertain, and perhaps anybody's else: it is enough to give warning that there are extremes on both sides; let every man use his best care and discretion to avoid them.

Nor yet would I prefer what is specious in theory to what is feasible in practice, or insist upon a greater refinement of rectitude than the parties to whom it is recommended can bear. Mankind must be treated in a manner suitable to their respective constitutions of mind: if you could entirely take off their admiration from the objects which ordinarily excite it, you would hardly succeed in placing it upon better; so you would only deprive them of those incitements which stimulate them to industry in their professions, and that veneration for high station which helps not a little to keep them in order: therefore no more can be discreetly attempted, than to bring the mind gently by practicable degrees to look inwards, and seek for complacence in her own motions, turning it off from externals in proportion as it can be found in these. Neither would I be so rigid as absolutely to condemn all self-valuation upon the gifts of nature, or fortune, or the improvements made upon either; for custom, sympathy, and the daily language of all we meet with, draws so continually this way, that it may be impossible wholly to avoid t: but then this spice of vanity, though excusable from natural infirmity, is not commendable, but ought to be carefully watched over, to receive no willing encouragement at any time, and be diminished as fast as possible by taking all occasions of inuring ourselves to examine the rectitude of our proceedings. For rectitude is not so destitute of charms, but that she would captivate many more hearts if she were attentively more looked upon: and men would much oftener act rightly, if they would take the trouble of reflecting oftener whether they do right or wrong.

9. Vanity in all species of it consists in a comparison of ourselves either with particular persons or the common run of mankind, or sometimes with

other creatures and even inanimate Beings: for when the humour takes we can value ourselves upon the privileges of human nature, assuming the title of imperial man, Lord of the creation; and is stirred up by the sight of anything superior or inferior to what we have ourselves, prompting to emulate the one or despise the other. But the true sense of honour respects only the laudableness of the deed, without reference to what is done better or worse by another: for his acting rightly takes nothing from our rectitude, nor can his failing excuse our own. Therefore the virtuous man is never better pleased than when he sees examples of virtue around him; for his benevolence makes him rejoice to find so many participate in that which he esteems the most plentiful source of happiness: on the other hand, the vain man rests supremely satisfied while shining among his inferiors, but if a competitor arises to eclipse him, he is instantly mortified. The terms Excellent, Noble, Exalted, Transcendent, Incomparable, and the like, usually employed in discoursing on things laudable, may make it imagined, that all honour subsists by comparison, if we do not reflect that complacence of every kind may spring from contemplation of a single object, without prospect of any other to compare with it.

A man with a good appetite may rejoice in his victuals without thinking how much better they are than bread and cheese, or take pleasure in receiving the present of a bank note without staying to compute how many times it is more valuable than a shilling, or delight in the conveniences of a house that he has taken, though he does not reflect how much he should miss them if obliged to remove into the next cobbler's stall: so the consciousness of having acted right in any instance, may yield its full complacence to him that has a taste for pleasure of this kind, though he never thinks of what would have happened if he had acted wrong. I know very well that comparison often enhances our pleasures, and as there is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance, so the sinner himself may feel an additional joy in contemplation of the wretchedness from which he has obtained deliverance: and I acknowledge that the complacence in well-doing will be greater in proportion to the pains, the dangers, the difficulties, the temptations a man has surmounted in performing it. But the latter case is not a comparison, any more than the music of a concert, because exceeding that of a single flageolet; and in the former it does not constitute the essence of the pleasure found in self-approbation; it only makes an accession from another fund, for what I did right to-day is equally so, whether I did right or wrong yesterday.

But wherever the complacence of an action arises wholly from the contrast, and would be lost if a different object were set together in prospect, it is certainly a spice of vanity: nor can justly be called a self-approbation, because resting upon two bases, the performance of another person equally with our own. Yet it may be said that rectitude directs to the more excellent performances in preference to the less, which nevertheless might have been commendable if the others had not come into competition; a man may rest satisfied in the prudent management of his own affairs while he has nothing better to do, but if some public service interferes which cannot go on without his helping hand, it would become wrong and blameable to keep still immersed among his private concerns: so that comparison seems here to determine the essence of laudableness.

But when we consider the matter attentively, we shall find the less excellent loses nothing of its value upon opportunity offered of the greater,

but because we cannot do both, the omission of the former outweighs in the scale of rectitude, and the latter is not a whit the more laudable for the other being in our power. The case is the same in matters of profit; where a man may pick up a guinea or a shilling but cannot get both, I suppose he will take the gold: not that the shilling is worth a farthing the less, or the guinea the more for lying by one another, but because by taking up one he must miss the other. Whereas the noblest action weighs nothing in the scale of vanity, unless the multitude or some particular person be supposed incapable of equalling it. Besides that rectitude has nothing to do with comparison, unless where there is a choice of different actions, and then it compares between things and not persons; judging of the excellence upon what the performer himself might have done, not upon what anybody else can do better or worse than him: which makes another remarkable difference between it and vanity.

But is not the sense of honour, when in its most perfect state, roused by the sight of excellence in others? does it not powerfully stimulate to the imitation of noble examples? will it not raise an ardent desire and eager wish to copy the brightest patterns of virtue, even when it has no hopes of ever being able to equal them? All this I can very readily allow, and the more readily because I look upon it as the surest sign of the appetite being genuine and vigorous: but this does not amount to a comparison of persons, as we may perceive by examining the similar motions of other desires. An empty stomach may lie quiet without giving disturbance while there is nothing in prospect to set it a craving, but the sight of company sitting down before a plentiful meal will presently make the mouth water to be doing the like; the more heartily they feed, the better they seem to enjoy their repast, the greater will be the longing: yet the desire here fixes solely upon their victuals, nor has anything to do with the persons; for if the hungry spectator be admitted to sit down among them, and find enough for all, he will not care how many others partake with him, nor how fully they share in the enjoyment. If a traveller on foot almost wearied down be overtaken by a carriage, I suppose he may wish to have a lift, and if he can obtain one, will rejoice in his easy situation: how many people soever there be in the vehicle, it makes his seat never the worse, provided there be good room for him; nor the better that he passes by hundreds of travellers still on foot: and if he have any thought of superiority over them, this is no gratification of the natural appetite for ease, which makes riding pleasant, but an impulse of vanity.

So when a laudable example stirs up an impatience to do the like, or makes a man ashamed of himself for falling short of it, if his appetite be set right, it is the thing done, not the party doing, with which he draws the comparison: for if he can once upon trial succeed in the performance, he has his desire, no matter how many others make the trial too, nor how they acquit themselves; their succeeding throws no obstacle against his success, nor does their disappointment promote it.

10. Therefore the desire of excelling is not the same with the desire of excellence; the distinction between them is pretty nice and commonly overlooked, but there is a just and real one, and very material to be well studied, because by this touchstone we may try the genuineness of our moral sense. Men are forward enough to aspire at things great and noble; but then it is generally, whether they know it or no, only to give them an eminence and superiority above others, which is as well answered by the depressure of everything else above them, as by their own advancement

and have so little value for the heights they aspire to, that they could be fully contented to stand where they are, provided they could be assured that nobody else would ever come up to them.

But he that desires excellence can take nothing in compensation for want of it: to see others deprived of it affords him no gratifications, nor will his complacence in the attainment be abated by their partaking with him; for he regards the intrinsic value of the possession, without looking onward to other objects from whence it may draw a value by comparison. The soldier may find a complete satisfaction in the consciousness of having done his duty in the times of danger, the magistrate in the uprightness of his judgments, the physician in his cares for the diseased, the tradesman in his honest industry, every private man in the sincerity of his dealings, although he should believe there are thousands beside who have the same fund of complacence. But when once he begins to say with himself, Nobody is so careful of his conduct as I, or to make an amusement of pitying the thoughtless multitude around, he is drawing within the magic circle of vanity: for genuine pity always carries a degree of uneasiness, therefore whenever we feel a joy in the exercise of it, we may be sure it is spurious and hypocritical.

Not that I mean to condemn all observation of other people's conduct, nor compare them together or with ourselves, in order to excite our abhorrence of what is bad and whet our appetite for what is good, for we may profit more this way than by confining our thoughts solely to our own speculations, upon the same grounds that make example more prevalent than precept, because what we see before our eyes strikes a stronger idea upon the imagination, than any we can raise by ourselves: but when we have once gotten our full idea we have done with the archetype, the benefit accruing therefrom being by information for our future conduct, not by increase of complacence in our present, all further contemplation might prove dangerous, as drawing us from following the impression so received.

Nevertheless, it must be owned that, in many cases, to excel is the necessary point to be driven at; where there are several competitors for the same thing, some one must prevail by his comparative not his absolute merit; no matter how little he have, provided all the rest have none, nor how much, while there is another still more deserving: and this happens so frequently, for scarce a day passes but we are struggling for some prize, important or trifling, which cannot be had by all, that it leads us insensibly into a habit of placing our honour upon superiority, and perhaps is the principal cause of that universal depravity of taste. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to guard against this evil custom with all our vigilance? if we can succeed in bringing our appetite to fasten upon what we do ourselves without reference to what is done elsewhere, we shall lose nothing by the change not excepting that superiority the world is so fond of, for whatever of it can be attained, we shall attain by constantly doing our best. Even in common conversation I would have a man endeavour to shine; but why need he strive to outshine? let him shine as bright as he can, and if outshining be in his power it will follow of course without his seeking, if not in his power he will but fret and vex himself by striving for it.

When competition becomes unavoidable by our being one among many striving for the same thing which all cannot attain, the desire of surpassing the rest ranks in class among the motives of use, not those of honour: the indulgence of it is justifiable not laudable, nor need we value ourselves thereupon any more than upon striking an advantageous bargain. But

occasions of this sort happen so often, that the frequency of them transfers satisfaction from the advantage gained by surpassing to the surpassing itself, and thenceforward we pursue it as an ultimate object of desire. To avoid which translation it will be prudent, as much as we can, to keep the particular advantage in view, so as to remain indifferent to the thoughts of surpassing, unless when necessary to attain some other allowable purpose; for so long as the end continues in prospect, translation to the means can never take effect.

11. I have said before that the sense of honour has its tides, which ought to be regulated by the occasion according to the force requisite for surmounting obstacles that chance to lie in our course. When some new, praiseworthy habit is to be acquired, it behoves us to use all our skill and industry for raising a strong desire, that may carry us through the difficulties of the first entrance: but after being grown familiar and easy, whatever goes beyond that gently-soothing content, distilling from the consciousness of rectitude in the most common actions, is needless, unseasonable, and therefore a waste: for our spirits cannot keep up an ardent glow unless now and then for a little while, and if we spend them unnecessarily, we shall want them for more important occasions. People for the most part value themselves upon what they have acquired until they sink into indolence by losing all desire of making further attainments: here their estimation is misplaced and consequently vicious.

When this passion rises to an immoderate degree, so as to hang continually upon the thoughts, it becomes pride, and proves an effectual bar against all subsequent improvement, not so much from laziness as self-sufficiency: for the proud man so wraps himself up in his excellencies as to think he is all perfection already, or at least incomparably superior to the rest of mankind, which renders it superfluous for him to do anything even for the sake of surpassing. But if we recollect what has been shown in the proper place, that honour is there more deservedly placed where it may prove most useful, we shall see that it belongs primarily to nothing else than the right management of our powers and present opportunities, because there alone it can take effect: and secondarily to acquisitions, whether in possession or prospect, as it may spur on our industry to improve, or attain them. For a man cannot increase his wealth, his dignities, his health, nor the merit of his past performances, merely by the admiration of them: but if he have a strong appetite for self-approbation in the employment of every present moment, this will urge him vigorously to employ them so as may afford such gratification.

It will be asked, perhaps, whether the value of rectitude does not lie partly in the pleasure of a retrospect upon good conduct past; and whether such pleasure may not be laudably indulged. I readily admit this as one very valuable reward of virtue, and may be innocently received when offering of its own accord: but I see nothing laudable in the indulgence, as that term implies a studious hunting for it, and striving to make it dwell upon the reflection. Where this is done I apprehend it happens from the too common mistaken fondness for intense pleasures, which we have made appear in the Chapter upon that article, make nothing near so large an addition to the sum of our happiness, as those of the gentler kind: for our mental organs as well as our bodily muscles can bear only a certain degree of play; if put upon violent or continual exercise, they lose their tone, nor can give their first relish, but their motion becomes insipid and cloying. Therefore the proud and the vain man lie under the same error, though less innocent,

with the boy who wished to ride all the day long upon a gate; they find a vast entertainment in contemplation of their excellencies when newly discovered, so conclude they shall be supremely happy by keeping them in view without intermission: but the gust of novelty quickly flies off, and though they continue the exercise from inveteracy of habit, because they cannot help it, they find no more joy in it but continual mortification by the spiteful world refusing them justice.

Therefore true honour and true policy, which constantly unite, point always inwards upon the action now in our power: or if at any time they draw the eye to distant and external objects, it is only in order to direct or invigorate our endeavours in this. Such refined sentiment with a total indifference to all other allurements is indeed a height of perfection too far above the reach of mortal man, to be enjoined as a duty: it is the white spot in the middle of the target which nobody must ever expect to hit, yet by repeated efforts we may come a little and a little nearer. And there is abundant encouragement for us to use them, for in proportion as we grow more habitually expert at hitting the mark of rectitude in all cases, not only of virtue and duty but likewise of common prudence and propriety, we shall compass all other attainable ends without aiming at them; but for the unattainable, they were better let alone, because nothing besides labour lost and vexation of spirit could ensue upon our trying for them: a spontaneous complacence would accompany everything we do, with so much transport occasionally as our organs can bear, so much pleasing retrospect as our eyes can behold without straining, and so much general approbation too as is needful or fit for us to receive.

12. Having now endeavoured to settle the essence of true honour, which regards solely our own conduct, together with such other objects as may serve to rectify it, I might pronounce every self-approbation springing from a comparison of ourselves with other persons, or of things with respect to the persons possessing them, as falling under the denomination of vanity. But this I fear would be thought too severe and rigorous, unless I may be allowed to distinguish an excusable species of vanity, which is so much as arises unavoidably from the infirmity of human nature. For we are so perpetually drawn into the train of making comparisons by the example of all around us, by the general language and manner of expressing estimation, something of this turn appearing in the motions, the gestures, the tone of voice, the looks, and frequently the dress of every company we fall into, as renders it impossible to escape the infection. Whatever then we catch involuntarily this way may be ranked under the class of indifference lying between laudable and blameable.

But this species is ascertained by the degree, whatever passes the line of innocent moderation may be declared vicious; the difficulty lies in drawing the exact line, and determining what shall be deemed an extreme: we stand open here to the like attack as was made of old by the Academics and Sceptics against the judgment of the senses, with their sophism of the Sorites, or argument of the Heap; because, say they, if you drop a number of things upon one another you can never tell precisely when they begin to make a heap. But if I cannot tell the precise number of bees requisite to make a heap or a swarm, so that if a single bee flies off, the remainder will not be one, yet if I see a cluster of them as big as a pumpkin, surely I may pronounce that a swarm, without danger of mistake. Therefore I shall not undertake to set out the exact limits of vicious vanity, but leave it to every one's own judgment to discern what lies manifestly within them; if he be

tolerably observant, he will find more of whose denomination he cannot doubt than perhaps he can eradicate; to attempt to direct him might be only misleading him, since the same thing may be vanity in one person or one situation which is not so in another; as the same meal may be too much for a prisoner, which would scarce suffice him when enjoying the air and exercise of a journey. Therefore I need only try to point out the mischiefs naturally attendant upon vanity, in order the better to engage his observance in discovering, and diligence in guarding against it.

13. I have already remarked that it engrosses the attention from other objects whereon it might have been much better employed: for the proud man is so taken up in contemplating, the vain man in displaying, and the ambitious man in increasing his superiority, as leaves him no room to think of anything else not relative thereto: so he has not half the use of his judgment or powers, but slips his opportunities where the improving them would have redounded greatly to his advantage. But besides this, it proves a perpetual fund of contention, producing it even out of trifles; for it being impossible that more than one should gain the superiority, wherever this is the aim there must necessarily be an opposition; so the proud looks upon everybody as an adversary; if they show a disposition to excel in anything, it is an attempt to eclipse his lustre; if they mind their own business quietly, there is a hazard that by the prudent management of it, they may come up nearer to his pitch than he wishes. And the mischief sometimes spreads to multitudes not originally concerned in the quarrel: for the world must be thrown into confusion, because Pompey could not bear an equal, nor Cæsar a superior.

From the spirit of contention naturally proceed censoriousness, calumny, jealousy, and envy; these evil weeds may spring from other causes, as a competition of interest; but then for the most part they are only particular and occasional, whereas vanity renders them more general and habitual, having a suspicion of everything that may hurt it. The vain man, as such, must necessarily be selfish, as having a separate interest inconsistent with that of all other people, who it may be presumed would willingly do something for their own advancement; so he looks upon them as his rivals throwing obstructions in the way of his desire to excel: he cannot afford them the least spark of hearty esteem, because that would raise them a little nearer to his own level: he dares not do them real services nor sincerely wish them well, because he would conceit himself the only happy and deserving person alive: or if at any time he does a kindness, it is only for the vanity of showing his power, or raising a dependence.

Nor is his temper of mind more injurious to others than troublesome and dangerous to himself, laying him open to flattery and imposition: if you can find means to tickle his vanity you may do anything with him, serve any end upon him; he loves you prodigiously, but as he loves his horse, without any degree of esteem or benevolence, merely for being instrumental to his pleasures: he is discontented and fretful at not receiving his due from the world; if falling into any trouble or affliction, gloomy, desponding, and querulous, as not deserving such treatment from Providence. He would meet with continual mortification, for considering how many various qualifications there are among mankind, he could very rarely be the topmost of the company in all points, but that he has a trick to elude these accidents: for he persuades himself that whatever he happens to be expert in, is the only valuable accomplishment, all others being not worth having: by this

artifice, if there be twenty people together, each may be the only happy soul in the circle bearing away the bell from all the rest.

14. But this little temporary pleasure of an imagined superiority, the flattering bait of pride to get her swallowed down into the entrails until she takes habitual hold on the heart, is greatly overbalanced by many solid mischiefs: for nothing operates more powerfully in perverting the judgment, that guiding faculty by whose ministry alone we may render all the others serviceable. The vain man can never think justly of things nor equitably of persons, where his vanity has any the least concern, which it seldom fails to have in most cases occurring for his decision. It throws a bar against improvement by the persuasion of a sufficiency already attained: it shuts his ear against information and his heart against conviction, lest he should appear ever to have been wanting in knowledge, or liable to mistake. It prevents all self-examination, for fear he should find something that might wound his vanity: it renders him indocible of that most useful science of ignorance; for he knows of none within him to be the object of such science. It falsifies the weights and measures of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, laudable and blameable, making him judge of them according to what he has or does, or believes himself exaggerating his own and depreciating whatever belongs to another. It damps his industry by the disdain of little acquisitions as unworthy his notice, whereas it has been often observed, that a shopkeeper will never thrive who despises small profits: in like manner we feeble, short-sighted mortals, who at best are but pedlars in the trade of virtue, shall make no great progress at all if we neglect opportunities of gaining a little ground at a time. But the conceited will stoop to nothing that is not grand, noble, extraordinary: he must preside at the helm, or convert heathen nations, or draw multitudes at his heels, or knock down all opposers with demonstration; and if by scorning to do anything common he undertakes nothing feasible, he solaces himself with reflecting what mighty wonders he should have performed if such or such perverse incidents had not fallen in the way.

Vanity taints religion itself, and contracts the pale of salvation, usurps the power of the keys to shut, though very rarely to open: for it will not suffer the patient to bear the thought of sharing the favours of heaven in common with others, nor to admit a total dependence even upon the Almighty; but he must claim something as entirely his own which God did not give him, and this something he can find nowhere else, at least in so eminent a degree as in himself. He sees nothing of that cheerful prospect of nature which I have shown, in the Chapters on Benevolence and Equality, stands conspicuous to a benevolent eye: for one can be just to the advantages and enjoyments of all where one wishes well to all; but he wishes well to nobody, for fear it might endanger his supereminence. His delight, such as it is, lies in finding fault, in undervaluing, in blackening, in hypocritical commiserations; so being conversant only with objects turning the worst sides, he sees everything wretched and despicable around him: and melancholy moods, which will come upon us all sometimes through indispositions of bodily humours, or cross accidents, or want of engaging employment, has nothing to comfort himself, but laments a defect of goodness in the Disposer of all things, for he has no notion of goodness that does not single him out for his object.

If examples are not to be found of all these mischiefs produced in their full extent by vanity, it may be ascribed to that little mixture of good prin-

ciple which has place in the most faulty characters, or to other passions counteracting it, or to the awe of the world keeping it a little within bounds: for vanity, how much soever cherished by the owner, appears always odious to others, who look upon it as an attempt to encroach upon their right to reputation; so defeats its own purpose, and by exacting more than due, discourages the payment of what is due: for you cannot praise a proud man without giving him an occasion of triumphing in his superiority over you, and thereby becoming accessory to your own disgrace. Therefore he strives to conceal his pride, nor dares even think within himself that he has it, by which concealment he checks the growth of it a little, as the growth of weeds is checked by being covered with sun and air: so that perhaps there is not a thorough proud man upon earth, so completely such as may be conceived in theory; and if there be such a Being existent, it can be none other than the Devil. Yet whoever will reflect seriously upon what has been suggested, can scarce fail of seeing the natural tendency of pride to produce all those pernicious consequences above specified, and that they must necessarily abound more or less in proportion to the degree and inveteracy of the habit: which by reason of the continual forced concealment, just now spoken of, works more slily than any other into the sentiments and actions, and operates unperceived by the party himself. Wherefore we cannot be too vigilant over the wily serpent, nor too industrious to bruise its head whenever popping out, that it may have the less vigour to wriggle among our vitals, and spread its venom about in our constitution.

15. Nevertheless, it will probably be asked, would I then extinguish every spark of vanity in the world? every thirst of fame, of splendour, of magnificence, of show? every desire of excelling or distinguishing one's self above the common herd? What must become of the public services, of sciences, arts, commerce, manufactures? the business of life must stagnate. Nobody would spend his youth in fatigues and dangers to qualify himself for a General or an Admiral. Nobody would study, and toil, and struggle, and roar out liberty, to be a Minister. Perhaps in the next century, when the present set of generous patriots shall be extinct, the boroughs must pay their members wages again to serve for them. The merchant would not drudge on through the infirmities of age in filling his country with foreign commodities. The artificer, having gotten a competence sufficient to serve his pleasures, would leave the art to be practised by novices and bunglers. The man of learning would not spend his spirits early and late to enrich the public with knowledge, to combat error, or defend his favourite truths against all opposers. Perhaps this great city might become depopulate, we should saunter about among the cattle, or gallop madly after foxes, our language would grow rustic or childish, our dress slovenly, our persons nasty, our manners rude and coarse: poetry, music, painting, elegance, wit, and humour, would be lost from among us, the ease of affability, politeness, obligingness, and the pleasures of sprightly conversation, be things unknown. How will you keep your children from rolling in the dirt any longer than while you stand over them with the rod? how bring the school-boy to aim at anything more than just performing his task? how prevent your sons from consorting with the blackguard, or your daughters from romping among the grooms?

Now to confess the honest truth, I am afraid if this evil weed were totally eradicated, so as to leave no fibre of it remaining anywhere, we should find business of all kinds go on very slowly in the world: for we have for the most part such a lumpish indolence in the clay of our composition, such an

insensibility to all beyond the present impulse of appetite, as cannot ordinarily be roused to action without this fiery drug; or where other passions do instigate, they would make mad work unless this were employed to check them by its counter-action. Yet these benefits do not hinder it from being a weed of poisonous quality, for it is well known that poisons are often antidotes against one another, and many of them are used as medicines: yet there is no prudence in applying them where the case does not absolutely require it, nor other remedies may be thought of that will succeed as well. For my part I cannot help being persuaded that education may be carried on as effectually without any tincture of vanity: I found no occasion for it with my Serena and Sparkle: on the contrary, I endeavoured sedulously to pick out every seed as fast as sprinkled by any old woman of their acquaintance: and I have the pleasure to find they have made as good proficiency in every little accomplishment I could give them, have as much reputation in the world, and are as well received even among persons of quality as I could wish. As to boys, I cannot speak upon experience: I had vanity enough while a school-boy: as soon as I could read currently, having gotten some books of chivalry, I determined upon making the conquest of the world; but being of a weakly constitution and continually bumped about by other boys, I found this scheme impracticable, so at thirteen resolved to write a poem finer than Homer or Virgil. Before I went to the University, being taught that the solid sciences were not more noble than poetry, I purposed, as soon as I should have made myself perfect master of logic, to elucidate all useful truths, and banish error from among mankind. What benefit these ambitious projects may have done me I know not: perhaps my present labours might be owing to some remains of them, for I well remember that while the design of these dissertations lay in embryo in my head, they promised a much more shining appearance, than I find them make now I can review them upon paper.

If masters can find none other way of bringing the lads to take their learning willingly unless by raising an emulation among them, I would not debar them from this benefit: no more, if a nurse has none other way of keeping her child in order than by frighting him with an old man in the cupboard who will take him away when he is naughty, would I be so indiscreet a free-thinker as to dispute the reality of the old man: for it is better the child should be kept good by superstition, vanity, or any other means, than not good at all. But there may be a commendation which has no personal comparison in it, and the pleasures, the advantages, the credit of a proficiency in learning, may be displayed in alluring colours without suggesting a thought of superiority over others, or of equalling the topmost. I have acknowledged before, that it is a very delicate point to distinguish between the desire of excellence and the desire of excelling, and the one is very apt to degenerate insensibly into the other: yet I think it may be effected by a skilful and attentive tutor, and the former preserved in its purity will answer all good purposes more effectually without endangering the inconveniences expectant upon the latter.

As for persons in public character, I believe they must be allowed a larger dose than ordinary, because I know of none other incentive vigorous enough to carry them through the continual application, the toils, the self-denials, necessary for performing great services: unless it be a hearty public spirit founded upon the strong habitual persuasion of an indissoluble connection between the general interest and private. Whether what I have before offered concerning the divine Equity and universal do-

minion of Providence may contribute a jot towards introducing such persuasion, or may put others of greater abilities upon enforcing it more effectually, I cannot pretend to augurate: but I fear it will not be made to prevail among mankind presently, unless the Millennium should arrive in the current century, as some commentators on the Apocalypse have foretold. With respect to great merchants and traders, who have just extended their commerce and experience to a pitch that renders them capable of being more serviceable to their country than before, since they may be presumed to have entered upon their professions solely with a view of gain, if they should ever outlive this passion, I would prescribe them a large potion too for the public emolument. Then the poets, players, fiddlers, and the like, as they rarely make a fortune, and their occupations drudged in day after day can be no emolument to themselves, they can do nothing for our entertainment further than driven by mere necessity, unless you keep up their spirits continually with a dram of the same.

But though I am so indulgent to the use of this noxious drug, wherein it cannot be done without, yet as apothecaries when dispensing a recipe wherein antimony, solanum, laudanum, or mercury is an ingredient, are extremely careful to weigh the exact quantity, because a grain too much might prove fatal to the patient; so would I not have a speck of vanity admitted more than absolutely necessary for the case, but every redundance of it mortified, or rather the whole so far as feasible made to change its quality by drawing off the thought from a comparison of persons to that of things, which we have seen before will work as vigorously where it can be obtained in equal degree.

16. And the better to satisfy ourselves of there being a real difference between the desires of excellence and of excelling, we may remark how very frequently the one leads astray from the other, fixing the attention upon show and appearance, rather than upon solid substance and intrinsic value. It chooses to move alone in a narrow sphere, where nothing noble or important can be achieved, rather than share jointly with others in the movement of mighty engines by which much good might be effected. Where did the desire of excelling ever glow more intensely than in Cæsar, whose favourite saying we are told was this, That he had rather be the first man in a paltry village, than the second in Rome. Did not Alexander, another madman, in the same species of frenzy, chide his tutor Aristotle for publishing to the world those discoveries in philosophy he would have had reserved for himself alone? But if he esteemed learning an excellence, it would have been a more excellent deed to have spread it with his conquests. It must be allowed that none ever surpassed the supassers of mankind in the passion for comparative glory, unless it were the Devil, into whose mouth Milton has with great propriety put the like thought with Cæsar's, Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven: and we are told the same vain-glorious being traverses the world with indefatigable zeal to destroy excellence wherever he can find it.

On the other hand, the most excellent works have been achieved without a mixture of vanity: Christ has none: his Apostles had none: but he taught them meekness and humility as a principal rule of conduct, and rebuked the sons of Zebedee on their betraying a slight inclination to excel. If we can suspect any of them of having a tincture, it must be Paul; and perhaps this might be the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him, to whom were owing his angry overbearing style, and obscure, hasty

method of argumentation producing those dark speeches which the unwary wrest to their own destruction. With respect to the mention of white robes with palms in the hands, and sitting upon thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel, we may understand of those as we are taught to understand of some Jewish institutions, that they were given for the hardness of our hearts, but it was not so from the beginning, that is, not contained in the original design of rectifying the sentiments, but necessary indulgencies to human infirmity, which cannot always rise even to a religious zeal without a gentle lift from vanity. But the whole Papal system, most of the heresies and schisms, the corruptions and perversions of Christianity have sprung from the desire of domineering, overtopping, and excelling.

Then if we turn to the heathen sages, Lycurgus and Solon, those two excellent lawgivers, had none: Socrates, the prime apostle of reason, Euclid and Hippocrates, had none: whereas Protagoras with his brother sophists, Diogenes, Epicurus, Lucretius, the Stoics who were the bigots, and the latter Academics who were the free-thinkers of antiquity, were overrun with it. And among moderns, Boyle, Newton, Locke, have made large improvements in the sciences without aid of vanity: while some others I could name, having drawn in copiously of that intoxicating vapour, have laboured only to obscure and perplex them. Pride is supposed to have been the Devil's fall: aspiring to be Gods worked the fall of Man: the first murderer was made such by seeing his brother's offering better accepted than his own: we see instances daily of strifes, contentions, disturbances, disappointments, vexations, springing from the desire of excelling; and where most beneficial, it often proves like the cow that kicks down the milk she has given. Hence we may fairly conclude the world would go on infinitely better if men would learn to do without it: and we may rank it among those evils permitted by Providence in order to bring forth some unknown good therefrom, and which ought never to be submitted to voluntarily, unless for the same reason as we submit to some great displeasure, for the sake of removing or escaping a greater.

17. This being the case, it seems the greatest of all absurdities that men should be proud of their pride and vain of their vanity: yet we often see it made the topic of panegyric that such a hero disdained to do anything like other folks, that he could not bear to rank among the rest of his species, could not be satisfied without surpassing all that went before him, and eclipsing all his contemporaries, but aimed always at eminence, and being more than man. But these are proper topics of satire as indicating a selfish, narrow mind, fond of insulting and triumphing over his fellow-creatures, a shallow judgment taken with a shadow nor ever reaching to the solid substance. For administration is a bauble necessary to bribe children into their good, because little master will not learn his spelling-book, nor miss hold up her head unless you tell them one will be admired above other children for his learning, and the other for her genteel carriage; so you must give them the rattle to entice them into the way that you would lead. The like artifice is ordinarily carried on throughout all the stages of education, and young people come out into the world with a resolution if not a confident opinion of excelling everything they find in it.

According as any part of learning is attained, applauses are less lavishly bestowed thereupon, and the lure turned upon the gaining some new accomplishment: for nobody applauds the overgrown school-boy for being able to read, nor the bachelor of arts that he can construe Virgil, because it would be needless after habit has rendered the practice easy, and the uses

of it are discerned. So that applause is no more than an expedient to supply the want of discernment in youth, and raise an artificial desire of those attainments whose advantages are yet unseen: and whoever cannot act all his life without such instigation, nor discern the intrinsic value and excellence of what he ought to do, continues a child all his life, without ever having his judgment ripened to the full maturity of manhood.

But if there be ability to perform extensive services, it is not in mortal man to go through all the labours and difficulties requisite for accomplishing them by the mere strength of public spirit, for we have not enough of this vivifying principle in our nature: so we must supply the place with an ardour for excelling, or shall never effect the good in our power. Very true, this I admit without hesitation; but then the filthy load of indolence and selfishness that burdens us, is an infirmity of our constitution, and the discharging it by such way as we can, must be regarded as a necessity of nature, which is certainly right to be complied with, but surely no matter of boasting. One might like better to have no necessities of nature, but this is not in our power, therefore I am not ashamed of having them, because I cannot keep my body in health without them: yet I should never think of bragging that I went across the yard regularly, nor making that a topic of panegyric upon anybody. It may be proper for jockeys and running footmen to keep themselves spare and light by cathartics, and if their profession demands such regimen, I cannot blame them for practising it. So if Alexander and Cæsar could never be easy off the stool, I would not deny then that needful utensil, so long as their way of life and incessant hurry of enterprise required a mind perpetually alert, and they laboured under a paralytic insensibility to public good and intrinsic excellence, not to be removed without continual evacuation: nevertheless, it might have become them better to have concealed both their infirmity, and method of discharging it from all, than expect upon these accounts to be made the subjects of adoration.

18. But this lax habit, how much soever allowable where there is a long career of public service which cannot be run through without it, little deserves our recommendation for the benefit of the patient himself: it may soothe his fancy for the present, as I have met with some people who profess to find vast amusement in the meditations of a water-closet, but when once grown inveterate, there is no stopping it until it has worried him off his legs and proved fatal at last. Your perpetual rhubarb-chewers of vanity get a canine appetite which the most luxurious success cannot satisfy: they never leave running from one splendid folly to another, till they destroy themselves. If Persia be subdued, our hero-errant must seek adventures at the Ganges: if the army mutiny against being carried out of the known world, he must lead them over the Egyptian deserts to force an adoption from Ammonia Jove: if no further conquests remain, he must outbrave the elements, and defy the chilling power of Cydnus to do its worst upon his constitution: if strength of nature, or fortune, kinder than he deserved, carry him safe through this imminent danger too, the young Ammon having nothing left to surpass on earth will needs surpass his brother Bacchus, in the godlike attribute of drinking, so he swallows the grand Herculean cup again and again, until at last he succeeds in washing life away.

Nor let the potent flatter themselves that this thirst of glory is peculiar to them, for it is to be found among fiddlers and sonnet-makers; and multitudes, who have no prospect of ever rising to fame or power, yet indulge themselves in vain imaginations directing, chastising, governing, and ex-

ercising powers they have not: to which perhaps the study of romances and novels may have not a little contributed, by leading the persons conversant in them to fancy themselves actors in scenes similar to what they have been described. This humour endangers the like consequences as ambition, though in a lower degree; for our ideas being apt to run spontaneously in the trains whereto they have been accustomed, there is a great hazard that some parts of the character assumed in reverie will slip unawares into the conduct in real life, which may occasion great improprieties of action and grievous inconveniences. For the like reason, it is a very pernicious, though too common effect of parental fondness, to breed up children with a notion of their extraordinary parts and accomplishment, or any other unparalleled external or bodily advantage: for being taught to look upon themselves as superior to everything else, they will naturally despise what is suitable to their talents and situation, drive at things improper or impossible, gain a general ill-will, and perhaps run themselves into broils by claiming a respect and deference not belonging to them.

19. If we examine how we come by this passion for excelling, it will give us no very favourable opinion of it: some may suppose it innate in great souls, and so many other sentiments have been supposed innate, because neither the time nor the methods are remembered in which they were introduced. But nature gives us none other propensity than for pleasure: so the child can be easy and pleased itself, it cares not and observes not what happens to other people; and some little familiarity with objects gained by a course of time, must be allowed to give the knack of comparing, and discerning its superiority above other children. How then is this most usually acquired? not by rational discovery, not by maturity of experience, nor the documents of prudent instructers, but by the nurse, the servants, or the mother, improved by daily examples of others possessed with the like passion, and perfected by the acclamations of the mob, or interested encomiums of flatterers. Everybody says it is a fine thing to shine in comparison; it pleases because it pleases, for other reason they will give none: if you pretend to doubt of it, they wonder you can doubt, and answer with exclamations at your peculiarity.

Nor can other good reason for self-valuation be found, unless that it urges to strive in the attainment or performance of things useful or excellent: therefore so far as it answers this purpose it is justifiable, but no further; and this rule may ascertain both the measure and the objects whereon it ought to be placed. But it carries nothing intrinsic independent on that service to recommend it, not even the privilege of being uncommon, as those who are most vain of it fondly persuade themselves: for nothing is more common or vulgar than the desire of excelling: the Roman mob had it as well as Cæsar; and that was the reason they admired his grandeur, because they thought it a charming thing to possess. Every one of them would have been overjoyed to have been Emperor, but he alone had the means afforded him of gratifying his desire: so the difference, so much vaunted of, was none other than between a man whose appetite lies quiet because he has no victuals, and another in whom the cravings are doubled by the sight of dainties lying within his reach. But the means of gratification he had no title to value himself upon, they being extraneous to himself, the gifts or rather the loans of nature and fortune, not the property of the possessor.

For we have found no reason in the course of our inquiries to imagine a difference in the spiritual substances of men, which are themselves, everything corporeal being adventitious and inseparable from them: but they are

all equally capable of receiving whatever perceptions are impressed upon them, and moving whatever material particle comes within the sphere of their activity: so their powers of perception and action depend upon the configuration or present state of their bodily machine and mental organization.

But if this be too dry and abstruse argumentation for the master of the world, let us ask whether it was his own exploit that he was born in imperial Rome, of a patrician family, and name which the heralds could derive from the Trojan Iulus, instead of being the son of Alphenus, the shrewd-working cobbler. Mr. Waller thinks, Great Julius in the mountains bred, perhaps some flock or herd had led: the world's sole ruler might have been but the best wrestler on the green. But then nature must have furnished him with a stout nimble pair of legs, or he would have hardly aspired to throw all his brother bumpkins. Nor was birth and bodily activity enough without an exquisite texture of brain enabling him to call all the Roman citizens by name, and dictate to three amanuenses together. And yet with all these bounties of nature to befriend him, he might have lost all the fruits of them by want of proper tendance in his childhood; a little negligence of his nurse might have made him ricketty, an unlucky bump upon the head rendered him stupid, or idle tales of Fauns, Satyrs, Lemures, or Divinations, filled him with superstition so as to become weakly, hippish, and pusillanimous ever after. Neither, without the violent struggles between the nobles and populace, would he have any encouragement to think of overtopping his compatriots. Had any of these circumstances fallen out amiss, we may presume he would have had little share of that noble spirit of ambition, which made him prefer being the first man in a village before the second at Rome.

20. It is a trite observation that the silliest people are the vainest, and if such chance to be placed in high fortunes, which make them the admiration of he generality, they are excusable from their imbecility to resist the force of sympathy: but that persons of large understandings and strong natural parts should be driven along by the torrent, seems out of character; that those who pretend always to lead, never to follow, should not follow implicitly the superficial notions of a populace, should take their ruling principle from the babblings of a nursery, be deluded by the current forms of vulgar language to judge of things by comparison, may be thought matter of astonishment. Such, of all men, ought best to know the grounds of their own sentiments, to choose their persuasions, and form their estimation for themselves independently on popular bias. If they perceive themselves unable to run briskly enough in the career they have found intrinsically laudable as being intrinsically beneficial, without the aid of vanity, they have reason to be mortified at their inability rendering the assistance of such a dangerous auxiliary needful, but none to let it gain upon them a hair's breadth further than that necessity requires. For vanity is a passion, and the passions, though sometimes excellent servants, always prove bad masters.

It has been shown in the Chapter on Freewill, that we are guided in all our motions with as unerring certainty as the best-managed horse: we do not always know which way our rider will make us take at the very next turning just before us, much less at miles' distance. Our appetites and passions are the spurs and bridles that govern us, by which we are made to walk or gallop, to amble or curvet, to toil against the steepy hill, or rush down the dangerous precipice, to take the adventurous leaps of folly, or plunge into the sloughs of vice. These are the impediments abridging our freedom, and stirring up that contrariety of Wills within us, which, when-

ever we feel a want of liberty, was the occasion of our thraldom. Nor can we be certain whose dominion we lie immediately under; it is not impossible there may be subordinate governors, creatures of a higher species, who serve their uses upon us as we do with beasts of draught and burden: this impeaches not the government of Providence, whose universal plan comprises all degrees of subordination, adjusting them severally to the general design.

What though a sparrow lies at the mercy of some unlucky boy that has gotten a string about its leg still we know both from reason and Scripture, that it falleth not to the ground without our heavenly Father. Yet nobody would wish to be in the condition of the sparrow with his leg in a string, nor fall under the thraldom of any creature. The evils permitted by Heaven, though designed to work out some greater good, nevertheless are always grievous in some part of their operation: how much soever they may tickle the fancy at first, the wise man will see this is only a bait to tempt the heedless gudgeon, and will strive to avoid them whenever he can.

Among those evils, vanity ought to be counted one, as containing no solid substance to create an intrinsic value, or give it title to be denominated a good: it has none other ground than the delusion of an imaginary propriety in what are really the goods of nature or fortune deposited in our keeping. So that the best furnished stand in no better case than the ass in the fable carrying the image of Cybele: the opening crowd fall prostrate on either side as he passes, but their adoration is paid to the Goddess not to the beast, who would sell for no more at a fair than his brother Long-ear, carrying two bundles of rags with a gipsy brat in each of them. But alas! we poor strutting mortals are not such persons of consequence as Cybele's ass; we none of us carry the whole Goddess fully dressed in all her gorgeous robes and precious symbols; we creep in long procession one behind another, each bearing something from the sacristy.

The great and potent carry her crown embattled with turrets; the rich and opulent carry the gold and silver vessels for the sacrifices; the magnificent and elegant her nice-wrought robes and needle-pointed vestments; the beautiful and witty her flowers, embellishments, and perfumes; even the dancing-master, the milliner, the French friseur, and Italian singer, have gotten a rag of Cybele powerful enough to draw transports of admiration from connoisseurs. Those laden with useful knowledge or accomplishment carry some of the most valuable of her jewels; yet still they are her's, not the beast's that bears them; nor do they draw much admiration by their own lustre, unless set off with a multitude of false sparks and a deal of silver flourishing after the modern taste. Virtue itself is but an inner garment, the fine linen kerchief worn nearest the bosom of the Goddess: for though we must acquire it for ourselves, yet the abilities, the opportunities, the inducements previous to the acquisition, were of foreign growth imported hither from celestial regions.

11. Thus we see how little reason there is to value ourselves upon anything we possess, whether external, bodily, or mental advantage, whether accidental, or the produce of our own industry; for we do not possess in property but only as usufructuaries, and we know the lading will be taken off our backs, if not sooner, yet at the end of our journey through life; but for what new charge shall be entrusted with us for our next journey, we depend upon the bounty and merciful kindness of Heaven. And this may account for the distribution of applause being made among persons so disproportionately to the real value of their endowments and actions; because

upon this score they merit none, but solely for the sake of the good effects expected to ensue upon bestowing it. Therefore praise and reward are most discreetly applied to the novice, the giddy, the shallow, and the selfish, who have none other motive to bestir themselves in a good course; for where a man has no sense of his duty, you must bribe him to it if you will have it done: but whoever pretends to labour in pursuit of virtue or moral science, has least reason of any to repine at missing his share, because to him least of any it is either needful or safe, but much of it would vitiate his virtue, and turn his ardour for knowledge into mere pretence, deceiving even himself.

For virtue loses her essence, becoming self-interest, when the eye fixes constantly upon the gratification or profit beyond; and when the credit of making discoveries comes to be the object in view during the investigation, it hangs like a dead weight upon the judgment, warping away the thought insensibly from what is just and solid, to what is specious and glittering. Therefore there is no prudence in suffering a humour of vanity to hold up this object before us; for if it carry us faster than we could go without, it carries us like a runaway horse, so much wider out of our way. Nor need we solicit ourselves either for self-complacence or commendation from others; for provided we take care to shape our conduct aright, so much of either as can turn into wholesome nourishment will drop into our mouths without our seeking.

22. I have now done my best to know this siren Vanity, as the most likely means to escape it, for forewarned forearmed. I have endeavoured to turn it inside out, to discover its emptiness, to lay open its ugliness, and raise a disgust at the foulness it is found to contain when divested of its coverings; for it is the reproach of human nature, it breeds like vermin in the corruptions and infirmities of our constitutions, it is an epidemical disease spreading like the pestilence; for the trifling world around us so fills the air with infection, as the London smoke does with blacks, that we can neither keep ourselves nor our furniture tolerably clean without continual washings and scrubbings. It is such a dissembler there is no getting rid of it entirely; when you go to hunt it down most eagerly it will follow close at your elbow, mingling among your train, like an accomplice of a pickpocket, who joins in with the crowd as one of the pursuers. For a man may be vain of his exemption from the vanities he sees in another, or more vain of his having no vanity at all himself; when once he begins to say in his own mind, nobody has less vanity than I, he has more than he knows of, for all advantageous comparison foments it. One would think the contemplation of our own follies and fond imaginations should be the surest recipe to mortify it: but sometimes the contrary falls out by our growing vain in the comparison of our former with our present selves. We may take pleasure in abusing our nature to exaggerate our corrections of it, in example of the greatest sages of antiquity, who have performed wonders that way: puffed up with the conceit of how much we should cheat Zopyrus the physiognomist, and how our friends who know us would laugh as heartily at him as Alcibiades did, if he were here to try his skill upon our features.

Therefore it is the emptiest of all vanities to fancy ourselves utterly void of it; this lulls us into a security that leaves open the door for many others to intrude; it were better to possess our minds with the impossibility of escaping perfectly, and then we shall stand more upon our guard against treachery within, which would let in new enemies upon us. I think I may

answer for the benefit of this prepossession and consequent attention upon experience, having every now and then perceived some lurking vanity stealing slily in through crannies where one would least expect it, which convinces me there are traitors within, though I cannot yet find them out. All one can do with respect to the poison unexpelled, is to disperse it upon the skin, as physicians draw a gout they cannot cure, away from the nobler parts. So taking for granted I must have some fund of vanity in my composition as well as other folks, it is better to let it evaporate in odd thoughts, quaint expressions, sparkling similies, and long-spun allegories, than work into the sinews and marrow of argumentation. Perhaps there may be no hurt in sprinkling something that will startle and rouse the Reader when beginning to nod over a dry subject; and if he have a spice of the common malady himself, he will feel a soothing pleasure in reflecting how much more gravely and decently he could have managed the same topics.

But in all serious inquiries it will prove a most dangerous enemy, creating an interest in some particular issue, before it is seen which way our premises will naturally lead, and so employing reason in the servile task of maintaining a point, rather than its proper office of discovering a truth.

Therefore I must endeavour to guard against this invader of liberty as well as all others, proceeding with a becoming courage and vigilant circumspection, not overawed by great authorities, nor frighted by terrors of criticism, yet keeping a reverence for received opinions and just deference for the judgment of others, bold, not arrogant, in delivering my thoughts, not pretending to dictate, but offering for consideration, cautious of giving offence, turning things to examine them on all sides before they go from me, and regardful of consequences, sedulous to do my best, but content if that best shall prove but little, not having the vanity to disdain small services or even imperfect hints where I can do no better. Under the conduct of these guides I purpose to issue forth on my progress with a resolution, for I can but resolve, not undertake, to preserve a sober decent freedom throughout, with a perfect indifference to everything beside truth, use, and reconcilement.

CHAP. X.

THINGS ABOVE REASON.

As hard as I have been upon vanity in all its branches throughout the preceding pages, I am far from condemning a just regard to reputation: for this will prove a sanction to a man's own judgment of that rectitude which he makes the rule of his conduct, and gain him that willingness to receive his assistance without which his labours can be of very little benefit to anybody besides himself. Therefore, before I proceed further, I must guard against what is most apt to do injury to the credit of a work, the expectation of greater matters to be contained in it than were intended. If the Reader be kindly disposed, he will reduce his expectations so low, as but just enough to leave him a curiosity of listening to me: should be afterwards by great chance find more than he expected, the disappointment will hurt neither of us; whereas a disappointment the contrary way might do him a displeasure, and me a discredit, we do not either of us deserve.

Perhaps it might be imagined from some former passages and from the

great preparations made to fit myself for such an enterprise, that I am going to make a perfect reconcilement between revealed Religion and natural, in all their branches. I should be glad to do so much, and I believe it possible to be done, provided both be taken in their genuine purity, stripped of all the disguisements, and foreign mixtures cast upon them by unwary or ill-designing persons: but the task exceeds my skill and abilities. However, I mean to do the best I can towards it, which yet I did not think myself likely to do without cautious preparation. So my own abilities must be the scanty limits to determine the choice of my subjects: I shall take such only in hand upon which I seem likely to offer something pertinent to the main purpose, leaving all the rest to more masterly performers: well satisfied if I can effect the reconcilement in some few points where it has been commonly thought desperate, and not without hopes of doing something that way which may encourage abler workmen to make larger advances upon the same design. This attempt I have all along had in view from the very first, and have dropped a hint of it in § 57 of the Vision under figure of Gellius' interlineations, the traces whereof I am now beginning to recover.

I must desire likewise it may be remembered that my course has lain all along within the precincts of human reason, nor do I mean to pass the barriers now, for fear of wandering out of my knowledge: therefore shall not meddle with the external evidences, as belonging to another science I am not versed in. There are able champions enough among the divines to handle these weapons, to examine their just weight, to poise and point them rightly against the gainsayer: too many to need my feeble assistance, who might only stand in their way by my unskilful management. So I shall confine myself to such of the doctrines and duties on both sides whereof I can find a natural, unforced explanation, which may render them compatible, or sometimes corroborative of one another, so that instead of being detached seemingly discordant tenets, they may grow into one compact body, having a connection and vital circulation running throughout the whole.

2. The first object most expedient to begin our trial upon seems to be the ascertaining the proper province and jurisdiction of Reason; for here the parties usually become litigants on setting out: and till they can be brought to some agreement upon this point there is little hopes of travelling amicably in any other part of their journey. The Believer is perpetually warning men to beware of reason as a blind fallacious guide, exhorting them to submit their reason to faith, to believe things their understanding cannot fathom: nay, some have gone so far as to insist that we see all things in God by the eye of faith, and that our natural faculties discover nothing to us with a certainty to be depended upon. The Rationalist will admit nothing of all this, for he maintains that reason is the only faculty we have to help ourselves with, therefore if we discard this guide, we must grope in the dark without any guide at all: nay, insists that no man can help following it whatever he may fancy to the contrary, for whoever takes things upon the credit of another does it upon conviction of the other's knowledge and veracity, without which he would not heed him. Thus far we must acknowledge him in the right, and so he possibly may be without his antagonist being altogether in the wrong, if the latter have a different idea of reason: for while there remains a variance in this particular not taken notice of, they will only play at cross purposes, and may dispute for ever without any effect: therefore it seems advisable to

endeavour settling clearly what are our ideas of reason, before we go on to consider what it will do.

Reason in its fullest extent comprehends every inlet whereby light can break in upon us, the judgment of the senses, the learning received by instruction, investigations of our understanding, and the conclusions left in our mind thereby: and is synonymous with sense or discernment, by which we estimate the reality of any appearance or truth of any proposition suggested. In this comprehensive latitude it must be taken when we pronounce it the sole faculty we have to help ourselves with, which were not true if spoken of any particular means of knowledge exclusive of the rest. But we often distinguish between reason and appearance, reason and information, reason and experience, reason and authority, which are considered as so many distinct sources from whence knowledge may be derived; for what we are told and what we have seen we do not discover by reason, which need only be employed when other means are wanting or unsatisfactory: and in some such restrained sense the term must be understood by whoever talks of submitting reason to another guide.

But I cannot help observing, there seems a little inconsistency in the procedure of both parties: for the man who would persuade another to give up his reason plies him with arguments to enforce his miracles, prophecies, and other evidences, wherein he appeals to that very reason he so totally decries. On the other hand, he that insists upon reason being the sole faculty, which no man can help following if he would, has no ground to charge another with casting aside his reason, which is not possible for him to do: for the Spanish villager sees no reason to distrust his confessor in anything told him, so follows the faculty he has as steadily as the most enlightened free-thinker.

3. Therefore reason, to be made the subject of a dispute, must import something that is not the sole principle of assent, but capable of being deserted for some other guidance, and we must seek for some more determinate idea of it than is ordinarily to be found among disputants. And if we attend to the language of mankind, I think it will be found, that reason denotes that set of principles or judgments stored in the mind from experience or other sources: for when we say a thing stands to reason, or is discordant from it, we mean thereby that it coincides or disagrees with the notions we have already entertained. Now were we masters of mathematical certainty, our present judgments would be an infallible test to try all other evidences by, according as we perceive them repugnant or reconcilable thereto: but this not being the case, it would be the most unreasonable thing in the world to resolve against ever departing from our present judgment upon any evidence whatever, or to do it unless the new evidence overbalance the old.

Thus far we may go without offence to either side: but submitting implies something more than barely balancing the evidences; it carries the idea of a voluntary act to take off weight from the scale of present opinion; and when we reflect how often prejudice and passion slip into the balance, we shall see the expedience of submitting our reason by sedulously lifting out the weights they have cast in. On the other hand, if another would throw his prejudices and passions into the opposite scale, there is as much expedience in resisting, as there was in submitting in the former case. I shall not enter into the contests concerning the side whereon the prejudice lies; each opponent constantly charging it upon the other: it is enough to warn

both against the danger and unreasonableness of resolving either to exact or refuse submission at all hazards; let them use their best industry to find out the proper times for either.

But it is said there are some principles so strongly confirmed by constant experience, that though they have not mathematical certainty, they carry so full a degree of assurance, as no weight of testimony or other subsequent evidence can overbalance without aid of violent prejudice or passion, which is the circumstance making resistance expedient. Now I cannot easily admit that we may be so well assured of any principle as to render it absolutely impossible there should be any new evidence strong enough to overthrow it upon a dispassionate examination. We know for once this rule failed, when the Indian king discredited all the Dutchman had said before, upon hearing him assert, that in Holland the cold was so intense as to make the water hard enough to walk upon: for if we can scarce be better assured of anything than he was that if a greater degree of cold could make water hard, a less degree must proportionably stiffen and approach it towards hardness, which was contrary to constant experience.

But then as in the present disputes there is no room to expect such extraordinary evidence as may deserve the preference to all our old stores, but they are carried on by reasonings of man with man, upon the foundations lying open in common to all; I see no cause to admit exceptions against this rule, nor expedience even of listening to the proofs offered by a fellow-creature in support of a point directly counter to the clearest best-established principles of reason, unless by an experimental application he can produce the testimony of our own senses. If a man told me he drank out a bottle yesterday after dinner, I might take him at his word, because I see nothing in my ideas to hinder that he might do it: but if he added, that as soon as he had drank out the wine, he crept into the bottle himself, this appears so discordant to my clearest conceptions, that I should deem it superfluous to let him call for witnesses to attest the fact, or enter into a long argumentation to prove the possibility of it. I should cut the matter short by desiring him to send for the bottle, and if he would let me see him creep in again, I would engage to believe he had done it yesterday.

But the misfortune is, we are apt to mistake the extent of our rule by mistaking that of our reason: the strong glare of our clearest evidences makes them seem to cover more ground than they really do, by which means we are led sometimes to imagine them contradicted in matters whereof they are wholly silent. Hence comes the distinction between things contrary to reason, and things above reason, that is, beyond the limits of its reach. For sure none will be so hardy as to require assent against reason in points whereof the party stands in a situation to judge for himself: nor will any avow his resolution to refuse all other evidences, when he has no rational grounds from his own fund to determine either way. But the great difficulty lies in ascertaining what is above, and what contrary to, reason: there are perpetual disputes upon this article, some looking upon their non-comprehension as a certain mark of the contrariety, while others would impose the most palpable absurdities under the notion of their being above reason. The vulgar are generally too credulous, because their reason being narrow, there is little room to contradict it: and the learned too indocible, because having extended theirs to a larger field, they think everything a contradiction that will not come within the sphere.

I have heard it remarked that parsons and lawyers are the most troublesome people in the world for one another to deal with, for being used to argumentation and rejoining, they will take nothing upon trust without having it explained to their satisfaction; one will receive none of your creeds upon the authority of the Church, unless you trace out to him every link of the connection between speculative points, and the happiness of mankind; the other expects you to show what foundation there is in justice, that if a man has ever so good a cause and sets out ever so clearly in his plea, yet if he happens to demur by averment, when he should have concluded to the contrary, judgment shall go against him. And if they acquiesce in these things for peace sake, yet they look upon them as empty forms of no real use, imposed only to amuse the vulgar, and give an importance to the persons skilled in them. But in all trades, professions, arts, and sciences whatsoever, there is something of mystery understood by the respective professor, and clearly discerned necessary for his practice, but extremely hard to be made out plain enough to satisfy the reason of a stranger.

I shall not attempt to describe the certain mark by which things above reason may be distinguished from things contrary to reason, as being more than I can undertake: this is best learned by that most useful knowledge I have recommended more than once before under the appellation of the science of ignorance. That there must be a difference, stands to reason itself, which can pass no judgment concerning things above it, therefore they can have no contrariety to it, for a witness cannot easily be contradicted in points whereon he deposes nothing: it belongs to reason to judge of the external evidence offered in support of them, but would be a contradiction in terms to suppose reason capable of pronouncing upon a previous contemplation of their nature. But how much soever men acknowledge in general the limited condition of their understanding, this is but a profession in form to gain the credit of modesty, or rather they think themselves sensible of the limitation when they really are not: for you seldom find them sensible of it in particular instances. They will readily enough admit an ignorance of external objects, because this may proceed from want of necessary information, and casts no slur upon their capacity; but are wonderfully backward to acknowledge it in their ideas of reflection; for fear this might lessen them in their own opinion by showing a want of strength in their faculties.

5. Nevertheless, whoever will take the pains to reflect, may find instances of events whose reality he cannot doubt of, though the manner of their production be beyond all possibility of conception. We know that if two bodies lie close together, by pushing one you may move both, yet it is not to be conceived how the hindmost can move before the other is gone away to leave a space for it to move into, nor how the foremost can move before there is any motion in the other to impel it. Therefore some who were unwilling to allow anything above their reason denied the reality of all motion whatever: so that one may successively see Paris, London, and Edinburgh, without stirring an inch from one's place. We move our limbs with perfect command and expertness, without knowing any circumstance concerning the little fibres whereby we move them, how many they be, where they lie, or which of them belongs to each particular member. This is so inconceivable, that Hartly denied we ever move them at all, but that they are worked for us by the vibratiuncles of ether. We continually experience perceptions excited in our minds by the action of bodies upon

our senses, yet there is no conceiving any relation between impulse and thought, nor what connection the modifications of body can have with the perceptions of spirit. Therefore Berkley denied the existence of bodies, and that perception could be excited by anything less than an immediate act of Omnipotence. The pulsation of the heart, the working of the lungs, the tone of circulating vessels in plants and animals, the powers of elasticity and electricity, the action of fire, the prodigious explosion of gunpowder, are things inconceivable in their causes and manner of operation.

These then are all above reason, and if we become infidels to everything that is so, we shall lose the use of our senses, and strip ourselves of all knowledge and grounds of assurance of any kind whatever. We should attain a freedom of thought indeed with a witness, but such a freedom as a man would enjoy who should be carried up into the intermundane spaces beyond the reach of all attraction: he would have no force nor restraint upon him, it is true, but at the same time he would have no power of mótion, for he could neither walk, nor swim, nor fly. The divisibility of matter is above our reason, whether you suppose it endless or limit it by the doctrine of atoms: yet how confidently have many maintained the opposite sides of the question. Mr. Locke has shown us what one might wonder we should need showing, for one would think everybody should know his own ideas without being told, but he has shown us that we have no idea of anything infinite: therefore all infinities are incomprehensible; but who would make this a reason for disbelieving their reality? The most extravagant zealots for reason hold the existence of infinite space. Epicurus and Lucretius, who cannot be suspected of vulgar credulity, maintained the infinitude of atoms, and that infinite combinations were formed of them: nay further, that there are innumerable Earths wherein the very same transactions are passing as in this, champions of liberty railing in North-Britons, versifiers squirting out careless rhapsodies of harmonious Billingsgate, and Searches puzzling their brains upon old exploded questions which nobody cares a pin how decided, as being of no consequence either for raising a fortune, or making a figure in the House of Commons, or shining in polite company.

Thus we see how all are driven by the testimony of their senses and exercises of their reason, in whatever various manner performed, to admit the reality of some things inexplicable, and consequently above reason as lying beyond the reach of our conception. And if visible nature be so replete with mysteries, we must expect to find them in contemplations on the supreme Being, in whom everything is infinite, everything incomprehensible: of whose acts we have no experience nor testimony of our senses, but can only catch an imperfect glimpse by their remote consequences in his works. We have no clear idea of creation, nor the passage from nonentity into existence and personality, because all productions we know of were made of pre-existent materials; yet most of us are convinced the Beings we see must have been created. We have no adequate notion of necessary existence, yet are all persuaded to a man it must belong somewhere, the sole question remaining, whether to one object, or multitudes. We cannot conceive a pure act determined originally by the agent without some foreign influence: for the acts of bodies proceed necessarily from external impulse, and our own determinately from previous lights and motives: yet we cannot fail of seeing, the First Cause must have acted before there was anything prior to give an influence, or stand as the object of

intelligence; nor could he have had intelligence such in kind as ours within himself, for that would be making him consist of parts, one to be discerned, the other to discern, and this passively, because in all discernment we know of, the mind receives involuntarily the action of something else upon it. We can conceive Time and Space neither dependent nor independent on the Almighty Will and pleasure; for if we take the former, then, if it should so please God, there might be a time wherein there would be no time, and he himself might exist nowhere yet without ceasing to be, which seem to carry a contradiction in the terms: if the latter, then were time and space self-existencies, co-eternal with God himself, necessary assistants in his work of creation, by furnishing room, without which he could not have spread forth his worlds, and scope, without which his order of succession and courses of Providence could not have taken effect. Yet who of us doubts the reality of time and space, or that God had the fountain of all created Being solely in himself, without being beholden to anything external for making his gracious intentions practicable?

The aversion against admitting anything above reason, which nevertheless we have seen it is impossible to avoid, has been the fatal eddy drawing men into atheism: for because they could not conceive a substance which could neither be felt nor seen, nor apprehended by any other avenue of sensation, they denied the existence of spirit; because they could not apprehend the manner of creation, they maintained the external self-existency of matter, never considering that their dread of credulity drove them upon points more inadmissible than any they rejected. For if we have any sphere of reason, it must include the properties of bodies wherewith we are daily conversant: but our experience of what may be done by various assortments of them, will not suffer us to imagine that any combination of them can form a perceptive Being. We know that vast quantities of motion are continually lost by collision and pressure, which matter can never recruit, having none other activity than what it derives from impulse of things external: we know the action of all substances within our notice depends upon certain adequate causes, that their difference of primary properties, their number or proportion to the space they float in, must have had a cause to determine them, therefore there must have been something prior to their operation and existence. All these things are not above reason, our notions of them being grounded on experience, therefore whatever reason disapproves concerning them we must pronounce contrary to it.

But when we go to dive into the original causes, we may expect beforehand to find them above our reason: for of these we have no experience nor other knowledge of their powers, than may be gathered from consideration of what their effects must necessarily require. So that when anything appears hard of conception, if we examine what there is similar within our experience to form a conception by, this will be the most likely method to discover whether it be above or contrary to reason: for it is one thing to find nothing like what is proposed in all our stores of experience, another to find them discordant to it; the one is only a negative evidence, the other a positive, which prevails over the former in all courts of judicature.

I have suggested these considerations in order to recommend the examination of our faculties together with the grounds they have to proceed upon, before we go on to examine other objects by them; and prevail on men to make a difference between not understanding how a thing can be, and understanding clearly that it cannot be, which I conceive would help greatly towards preventing hasty determinations and groundless confidences

in many common affairs, but more especially in the contemplation of things invisible. Not that I have any particular end to serve by getting such persuasion to prevail, for I have neither pretence nor design to impose things hard of digestion: I have addressed all along to reason, endeavouring to make every thing as clear as the subject would permit, by examples, illustrations, and explanations, and desiring nobody to adopt any of my notions further than he can enter into the reasons on which I present them. And I am so far from intending to depart from this method, that it will be the principal aim of my future progress to apply what I have hitherto collected for explaining difficulties, and bringing down if possible some matters ordinarily esteemed above reason to lie within its compass.

CHAP. XI.

MIRACLES.

After the declaration made in the beginning of the last Chapter against meddling with external proofs, nobody can expect me to enter upon the authenticity of any particular miracle: no more falls within my province than to examine the credibility of miracles in general, and whether all proofs offered in support of them ought to be rejected without hearing, as an absurdity so abhorrent to reason, that no weight of evidence whatever can overbalance. I shall have no occasion here to distinguish, as is frequently done and frequently disregarded, between immediate acts of the Almighty and supernatural effects produced by subordinate powers, supposed to interfere in the operations of natural causes; because I do not recollect any objections lying against the credibility of one, that do not lie equally against the other. For that of the divine dominion not suffering the creatures to interfere, is rather an argument of the external kind, than of the intrinsic impossibility of their so doing.

It has been said that experience being the ground-work of all our knowledge, nothing ought to be admitted which is not supported by that: but let it be remembered that experience itself had a beginning, all things we can reckon among its stores were once new; therefore if nothing unsupported by it were to gain our assent, we should never have any experience at all. Or if it be allowed, from the necessity of the case, to receive new acquisitions until we have gotten a competent stock and no longer, when are we to fix the time of having gained this competent stock? for children at seven years old have some experience, and a man at sixty may have discoveries offered him out of all the course of his former experience. Well, but we must not take experience too strictly, perhaps by supporting may be meant not opposing; so that I may receive information of new matters whereof my former experience is totally silent, but nothing that contradicts the testimony I have received from that. I shall not take pains to prove that, properly speaking, no new event contradicts experience, which deposes only concerning things past: that having been already done in a better manner than I can mend by Mr. Adams, in his little treatise upon this article, though possibly something of what I shall offer may have arisen from hints suggested there. But whether with strict propriety or no, certain it is we do talk of things contradicting experience; when we conceive it to have been so full as to give a thorough knowledge of the subject in ques-

tion, whatever is offered concerning it that will not coincide with that, we term contrary to experience.

Nevertheless, experience itself will testify that such contrariety is not so invincible a bar, but that conviction can sometimes force a way in spite of it. Equivocal generation was formerly the orthodox opinion founded on constant experience, by which men knew it was the nature of dust and putrefaction to breed vermin: but now universally exploded. It was holden to be against experience, that there should be sexes among vegetables, until observations upon the farina of lilies, upon the dust flying among the blossoms of mulberries, and the female date-tree becoming barren after cutting down the male, brought the other doctrine into vogue. A few years ago the propagation of animals without sexes would have been thought contradictory to experience: notwithstanding which many have been since persuaded of the fact by their own experiments, or other persons' accounts concerning the fresh-water polypus.

2. Such instances happening more than once or twice, might convince us that experience is not so infallible a guide, as to justify our refusing information from any other hand: for in truth it never makes us thorough masters of the subject; we may know enough for our present uses, but can never know there is not more to be learnt, beside what we have discovered. Our overweening conceit stands upon a hollow foundation, being nothing else than the persuasion that our idea of things comprehends their whole essence, whereas our discernment reaches not to their essence; we can only observe what effects they work upon our senses or upon one another, and from thence deduce imperfectly the powers belonging to them and causes operating upon them; but can make no just deduction, that there are not other powers and causes whose effects we have never yet experienced. Therefore, as has been argued in the Chapter on Judgment, we have no such thing belonging to us as absolute certainty: the notion of it springs from vanity, as if it were beneath us to act or think upon lower grounds. But it has been shown in the same place, that although certainty was not made for man, yet man may do well enough without it: the strongest assurance we can get upon the best grounds of experience is our proper guide, which we shall do right to follow, yet need not pay such implicit submission as to pronounce it impossible we can ever have just cause to look aside upon some other object.

It will be said all this has nothing to do with miracle, for should we discover some new kind of operation unknown to the sons of men, we should still believe it natural, owing to a latent property always belonging to the bodies exerting it, though never before observed. Those who have changed their opinion upon equivocal or unequivocal generation, upon the sexes of blossoms, or upon the hatching of Polypuses, thought, we suppose, they had found out a secret in nature, not a force put upon her by superior power, producing an operation she was not able to perform. Very well; but let us first examine what we are to understand by nature, for in some senses, perhaps we may find that to be a secret of nature which we vulgarly call supernatural. I do not know anybody of whose person and features we have a more unsettled idea than that same dame Nature; we all think ourselves extremely well acquainted with her: do but mention her name, and everybody knows whom you speak of without asking questions, and yet we are perpetually varying our idea of her shape and size: but it becomes profound speculatists, who set up for reforming the reason of mankind, to know what they talk about before they descant upon it.

Let us observe to them, then, that nature is sometimes opposed to education, and natural endowments distinguished from acquired: we are supposed to run about in our childhood and speak our mother tongue naturally; but nobody learns Latin or dancing from nature, and custom is said to change our nature. Physicians are called in to relieve us from obstructions that nature cannot remove: farmers by cultivation make the ground yield them crops that it would never have produced naturally: gardeners by inoculation cause the trees to bear other than the natural fruits: and in general the term artificial stands in contradistinction to natural. Ingratitude, drunkenness, beastiality, treason, animosity between near relations, are termed unnatural. Yet I suppose in all these cases, what is done more than nature can do, will hardly be counted supernatural: which shows that we use the term Nature in a more or less extensive sense according to the occasion whereon we apply it.

3. The word Nature when standing alone commonly denotes the properties of bodies and course of operations among them falling under our notice; the several species of animals, plants, fossils, and so forth, their production, preservation, their powers and qualities affecting one another: all which I take to be the objects of physiology, or natural philosophy, and whoever could understand them all completely would be deemed to have a thorough knowledge of nature. Yet this idea of it will not fully suffice to carry us through our present question, which extends to a larger compass; the knowledge, the sentiments, the powers and actions of man, together with ethics, politics, mechanics, manufactures, commerce, and other arts and sciences dependent thereon, all which the naturalist has nothing to do with, yet must all be added to his stock to make up that nature whereof we may have experience, and beyond whose experienced powers we would pronounce every thing supernatural and incredible.

But with this addition are we sure of having the whole of nature still? before we can proceed secure in confidence of having gotten all our materials together, we shall have this preliminary to contest. For there are those who think that from the view of this nature, they can discover another beyond, whereof this is only a part, and the rules whereby it is governed only municipal laws of a single province within a boundless empire: and that there is a universal nature having general laws superior to the municipal, connecting all particular systems in one well-regulated polity under one supreme Governor. Now let our experience of this sublunary globe and the transactions upon it be ever so complete, what can we know by it concerning the general polity, or how far that may, or may not overrule the particular one provided here?

But you suppose the municipal laws are so provided as to make a part of the general, and therefore they will not be broken in upon, nor must we expect to see things conducted otherwise than by them, until transported into some other province, where there is another system prevailing. Why, so I suppose too, because I never yet saw an alteration made in them, and shall continue to suppose until I see cogent reason to suppose otherwise; and I think I have shown myself throughout the course of this work, as hearty a friend to nature and experience as need be desired: nevertheless, this supposition, though a rational one, is but supposition, amounting to a moral, not a mathematical certainty, nor strong enough to render all evidence whatever to the contrary invalid, or make it absolutely incredible that such should be produced.

For let us consider how far our experience deposes: that there are such powers of nature and such an order as we find operating and prevailing here, but with regard to all beyond it is totally silent: it informs us nothing concerning creatures invisible, what powers or views they may or cannot have, what inducements or restraints with respect to their interfering in sublunary affairs. Therefore, to argue in Mr. Adams' way, evidence offered to prove an interposition either of the divine power or invisible creatures, does not contradict experience, because it deposes to a point whereon that deposes nothing. All that experience informs us of, relative to the case is, the capacity of substances within our notice to receive positions and stations by foreign operation upon them: thus far, then, both evidences agree in their testimony, for what miracle does not work a change of station in substances, or put them into a position we know them capable of receiving?

It is now an incontested principle that all matter is homogeneous, the difference in bodies arising from composition, or the different position of their component particles with respect to one another: so that wine consists of the same matter with water, every particle of one being capable of taking its place in the other, and of receiving the motion requisite to convey it into such place. But we never knew an instance of water changed into wine, otherwise than by a passage through circulating vessels of the vine and the grape, and perhaps in its way receiving an accession of other particles which never were in the composition of water. What then? we may still know that the matter composing those particles was capable of standing in such arrangement as would have made it water; and experience deposes nothing concerning other powers than those falling under our notice; whether they have or have not skill, discernment, and activity, sufficient to change the arrangement of matter in water, so that it shall instantaneously become wine.

In like manner we know by experience that matter is capable of standing in the arrangement of the human body performing circulation and other vital functions: and spiritual substance is capable of taking a station in such part of the composition where it may receive the notices brought by the organs of sensation; both which together make a living man. We know not what corporeal particle, nor what manner of adherence, holds the perceptive substance in vital union: however, we know it is there, and when once dislodged, have no reason ever to expect its return, because we see the machine continually tend more and more to corruption. But we have no experience to assure us there are not other agents who have command enough over the motion both of corporeal and spiritual particles to reinstate them exactly in the stations we have already seen them capable of occupying, in which case the dead man would be restored to life: and until such assurance can be had, the fact must remain credible.

Since then we find by experience of natural motions that substances are capable of receiving miraculous changes, upon what grounds can we deny Almighty power capable of working them? or even pronounce peremptorily upon the incapacity of other powers? If there be a mundane Soul, such as I have described in treating upon that article, extending everywhere, permeating everything, perceptive and active throughout, intelligent in every part by communication of lights from the rest: I see nothing inconceivable in the thought of his turning water into wine, or restoring a dead man to life, or even making a new man by arranging the elements into a vital machine, and stationing therein one of his own component particles: this seems to me so far from being contrary to reason, that it

does not rise above reason: nor do I find a difficulty in comprehending it so great, as in comprehending how I move my own limbs. If I believe no superior power does interfere to disturb the courses of visible nature, because I see no reason for it, it does not follow from thence, that I never can see reason: for there is a material difference between finding no reason for a thing, and finding a solid reason against it; the one suffices for me to withhold my assent, the other alone can warrant me to condemn it as incredible.

4. I do not know that it is needful to add anything in particular upon Revelation, as a distinct species of miraculous operations: because I apprehend that it might be effected by an arrangement of particles or change of modification in our mental organization, similar to those made in bodies by the others. Men commonly conceive their dormant stores of knowledge to be something, they do not know what, whether substance or modification, or component part, lying in the mind itself, and therefore not capable of locomotion, or diversity of arrangement. I have examined this matter carefully in the Chapter on Judgment and other places, and found reason to conclude, that the mind or purely spiritual part receives nothing besides perception, nor can contain anything it does not actually perceive: that in all perception there must be two things employed, one to discern, the other to be the object discerned; which object cannot be something within the substance of the mind itself, unless you will suppose her to consist of parts some blind and imperceptive, producing no effect until touching the others' notice.

Therefore the objects must be exhibited by something external to the perceptive mind, which something I have termed the mental organization, the various arrangement or motion (for I do not pretend to determine which) of whose particles form the judgments that we discern: in a manner analogous to that of writing, where the shape and arrangement of the letters present the sense of them to your thought; or of speech, where the modulations of sound produce the same effect. Our judgments in the natural way proceed ordinarily from instruction, conviction, or experience, but sometimes we find them arise from other causes: in dreams and delusions they are produced by mechanical operation; strong liquors, indigestion, external accident and passion, often make us judge very differently of things; eagerness of desire will assure us of success beyond all grounds of expectation, and terror magnifies dangers. Archbishop Tillotson says, that many people have told a lie so often until they believed it to be true: and we may have known persons who remembered having given a key or a paper to somebody else, and immediately after found it in their own pockets. All which shows that judgment is not passed upon knowledge in the mind itself, which we may presume would be immutable while deposited there, but upon representations exhibited in something else, which is capable of receiving changes from external and mechanical causes.

And though we have no ground from experience to think but these causes act naturally, yet since we have not experience of universal nature, that does not hinder the operation of other causes from producing different modifications, which will exhibit correspondent scenes of judgment for the mind to inspect, and whatever the mind sees there from time to time, that is her present determination. Therefore, though I believe it never actually done, yet I conceive it very feasible in theory, that such a Being as we have imagined the mundane Soul might hold discourse with a man by suggesting

ideas to his thought, like those another would excite in conversation; and by this means instruct him in knowledge he could not have attained any other way, describe persons and transactions he never saw, declare to him future events that human sagacity could not discover, inspire him with sentiments, move his passions, and rouse up a spirit to any particular undertaking, more effectually than the most accomplished orator with all his powers of persuasion.

5. It may be said that all we have hitherto urged amounts to no more, than that there may be a power of making supernatural effects, but shows no probability that such a power ever is excited. I do not desire it should; I would have them still remain improbable; all I contend for is only a possibility: but things improbable have sometimes been known to come to pass, therefore improbability alone will not stop our ears against all evidence offered to prove their reality. Nevertheless, it may be denied that we have yet made out even a possibility; because the acts of voluntary agents, and such we must suppose all workers of supernatural effects to be, for necessary agents can never stir a step beyond the laws of nature imposing the necessity upon them, may be rendered impossible by their repugnance to the character of the agent, how much soever they lie within his power to perform. A miser has it in his power to make ducks and drakes of his guineas; a nobleman to hire himself out at harvest as a common labourer; a fond mother to strangle the child she doats upon: yet we think these things impossible to be done by the persons to whom we know it is easily possible to do them; and this impossibility suffices to make the fact incredible. Now the character of infinite wisdom and goodness belonging to God, and the like character of universal benevolence and as boundless intelligence as created Being can possess, ascribed to the mundane Soul, will not leave it credible, that the original plan of creation should have been laid imperfect so as to need occasional corrections, or without such need that either would interpose to disturb the order of nature in any single instance, much less would employ their superior power in hurtful, idle, or trifling operations.

All this I very readily admit, as well the assumption as the inference deduced from it: but do we know the original plan so perfectly as to be assured the lines of connection between the several systems comprised in it may never work an alteration in the laws of visible nature; or that some interpositions were not contained within the plan, and made essential parts of it? For why is it necessary that every supernatural operation must be a sudden expedient to supply an unforeseen defect, and not a preconcerted design interwoven among the order established for second causes? Nobody can well doubt but God might have caused the corn to sprout up spontaneously, or houses fit for our commodious habitation to grow out of the ground like trees; yet he has so contrived his laws of nature here below, as to make the interposition of human industry necessary to preserve this sublunary system from falling defective. What then should hinder but that he may have purposely framed his laws of visible nature incomplete without some supernatural interpositions to fill up the remaining spaces in his plan of universal polity? And whether these interpositions be made by immediate exertion of Omnipotence, or by ministry of the mundane Spirits, vulgarly called Angels, either upon express command or upon discernment of the expedience, is not material to our present purpose.

6. Then for things pernicious, wanton, and trifling, I must own it appears to me incredible that any such should be the work of God or his superior order of creatures: but are we such perfect masters of wisdom and

goodness, as always to know assuredly what is, or is not inconsistent therewith? The conceit of this knowledge makes people think hardly of Providence for the few evils scattered about in nature, and has driven some to deny a Providence upon account of the many errors and wastes, worthless productions, and unavailing accidents, observable everywhere, in which they can see no use nor design. But we see not the half of nature, nor of the consequences resulting from events passing within our view, so there may be good fruits produced by things that yield nothing but evil so far as we can discern, and important uses in what appears to us unprofitable and frivolous: nor is it unlikely that the wisdom of God should seem foolishness to men, or the follies of men be turned by him to serve wise and excellent purposes. Persons following different professions and sciences are no competent judges of the pertinence of one another's proceedings: that may appear idle and nugatory to the unskilled, which the professor knows to be very material and necessary; much less can we undertake to pronounce upon the actions of creatures of different natures, or say with confidence what is becoming or important for them to do, and what unworthy their attention.

Some have amused themselves in a vacant hour with imagining what ideas the brute creatures must entertain of our transactions, supposing them endued with understanding and reflection like ours. It is certain that no understanding can proceed further than what it may strike out from the materials it has to work upon, all beyond must appear wilderness and amazement; therefore the animals having little intercourse among us in our affairs, nor means of information by speech, would have no conception of our politics, commerce, mechanics, mathematics, rhetoric, fashion, and other methods of employing our time, but our proceedings must appear for the most part strange and unaccountable. I have heard a story of some very valuable jewel or piece of plate in a house having been lost in such manner as to make it certain some of the family had taken it, but no suspicion could be fastened upon any particular person, for they all denied having any knowledge of the matter. The vicar was called in to examine them, but being able to get nothing out by his interrogatories, he engaged to discover the thief by art magic: for he had a cock among his poultry of wonderful sagacity, that being rightly prepared and situated, would know the touch of a light-fingered person in the dark; so he fetched the cock tied down upon a nest of hay in a basket, which was placed at the further end of a darkened room; the servants were ordered to go in one by one and stroke the back of the cock, who upon feeling the delinquent would instantly crow. They went in each of them alone and returned, but still the cock did not crow. Our conjuror seem surprised, for he said he never knew the cock fail before, and surely they had not all touched him. Yes, indeed, and indeed they had. Pray, says he, let's see your hands. Upon turning them up, the palms of all except one were found as black as the chimney stock, for he had besmeared the cock's back with grease and lampblack, of which those who were conscious of their innocence, had taken a strong impression by giving a hearty rub, but the guilty person, though having no great faith in the cock's virtue, yet not knowing what tricks your learned men may play, thought it safest not to venture, especially as his word must be taken, there being no witnesses in the room with him to see how he behaved.

Now imagine the parson's poultry possessing as large a share of the rational faculty as you please, they will never be able to account for these

ceremonies undergone by the cock: but when he got home to relate his adventures, if there were any free-thinking cockerills in the henroost, they would treat it as an idle, incredible tale; for there could be no use nor purpose in daubing his back, tying him in a basket, shutting him up in a dark room, and sending so many different people to rub him over. Certainly, say they, our daddy begins to doat, and vents his dreams for real facts: or else has been perching carelessly upon the edge of a tub until he fell backwards into some filthy stuff within it, and now would impose this invention upon the credulous vulgar among the chicken kind, to set us a pecking away the grease from his feathers, in hopes we shall foul our bills or spoil our stomachs so that we cannot eat, and then he will have all our barley to himself.

To return now to the human species: it is far from incredible, that our sentiments and transactions are of some uses to invisible orders of Beings, but what those uses are, or how resulting, we have no sort of means to investigate: therefore it is impossible for us to know what thoughts or actions of ours might not be serviceable to them, which yet would not follow in the ordinary course of natural causes. We know that delusions have abounded in the world; and upon the principle of All things ordered for the best, we may presume there is some good use of their so abounding: why then may not the same apprehensions and state of mind be excited by real appearances, as are now effected by delusion? Thus much we may allow, that many a man has been persuaded of a superior power by means of his imagination, whose understanding was too dull, too superficial, or too little exercised ever to have been convinced by rational proof, and such persuasion, though leaving gross and erroneous impressions behind, yet is better than none at all. For my part, I see nothing absolutely incredible even in the common tales of witches, fairies, and apparitions: though they carry so strong an improbability as not to be overcome by any evidence I have yet met with in support of them. But I do not think so highly of my judgment as to take its decisions for mathematical demonstration, or imagine any improbabilities discerned by it absolutely invincible: a moral assurance to the exclusion of all doubt is the highest pitch I can expect to reach, but I have sometimes found reason for doubting upon points whereof I had not any the least suspicion before.

7. With regard to the speculative credibility of interposition, I have observed in the Chapter on Providence that the constitution of all created intelligences, so far as we can comprehend of them, seems to require it: for if God had rested from his works from everlasting, having once for all given such a vigour and regularity to nature as that it might have proceeded on its course for ever without needing the further touch of his hand, all dependence and thought of him must have been utterly lost from among them. For he would have been deemed to have delivered them over to the establishment of second causes, with which alone they had concern: so the question whether all things had a beginning, or from what power derived, would have remained a matter of mere curiosity. And within the sphere of our experience we see what efficacy the opinion of divine interpositions has to preserve a sense of God upon the mind. It can hardly be denied, that much more than half the Religion of mankind grows from this root, which if you could totally eradicate, you would leave very little notion of him remaining in the world. Men at best would proceed upon the principles laid down [in the course of the] first Volume, of

consulting the good of others so far as their own temporal interests were concerned: and it must be great luck to prevail on them to practise so much goodness as that.

Then if we proceed from the abstractions of theory to reason upon facts, we shall find, as has been already urged in the same Chapter, that neither the present form of this Earth we inhabit, nor courses of the planets composing the solar system, could have been eternal, nor probably coeval with the existence of matter and general laws of solidity, impulse, attraction, repulsion, and motion: therefore, there must have been an interposition to produce the present order of visible nature out of the confusion of a Chaos, or out of some former order obtaining before. Thus here seems to be a positive proof deduced from experience that the divine Power, either by itself or by some sufficient minister, does interfere with the laws of universal nature in the production of a new system, which was not provided for by those laws: what then should hinder but that the like might interfere upon great and important occasions, during the continuance of a system? Nor is experience wanting in the apprehension of most people of events happening among us daily, which upon reflection must be acknowledged miraculous in the strictest sense, that is, immediate effects of Almighty power without any second cause intervening.

One cannot always tell what grounds to go upon in arguing with particular persons, their notions being so various, and so often kept in reserve, as makes it difficult to know what they will admit and what they will deny. But it is the orthodox and current opinion, that the Souls of men were created at some time while the fœtus lay growing in the womb. But it must be acknowledged that no created Being, of how exalted a nature soever, can produce a new substance out of nonentity, or be employed as a minister in the operation. The laws and highest powers of nature can do no more than form compounds of the materials under their command; which materials, if corporeal, can at best make but an exquisite machinery, destitute of all perception and voluntary motion, unless some particle of spiritual substance be stationed therein drawn from another fund where it had resided before. But to breathe into the organized clay a breath of life nowhere existing before, so as that the composition shall become a living soul, must be the work of no less than God himself. So that miracles are so far from being incredible or even uncommon, that we have them continually worked, as often as a child is born, if not as often as a woman becomes pregnant.

8. Perhaps these daily creations will not be counted miraculous, because happening daily, and nothing be admitted to bear that title, unless what is rare and extraordinary: but whether we give them the epithet or no, their essence remains the same, and there may be wisdom and expedience in a measure taken upon particular occasions, though it be not repeated perpetually. To reject everything as incredible merely for its being strange and unusal, would be doing like the lowest of the vulgar, who can scarce be brought to credit anything of the manners or ingenuity of foreigners, very different from what they have been accustomed to see: or like those who will not believe an historian relating that the beaux of king Edward the Fourth's reign wore their shoes of such enormous length, they were forced to tie up the toes by a string coming from the knee, to prevent their doubling under them. So that this argument proceeds at best upon the principles of the nursery, for it is much the same with that used by my children's nurse, when upon seeing a picture of my Euridice brought home, she cried

Lauk! that cannot be like mistress, for she has never a blue gown. But if this anile objection must prevail with us, yet it will not hold good against the miracles most strongly contended for, which for some years during the Christian, and some ages during the Jewish dispensations, were so frequent that they can scarcely be called strange and unusual events, so much as an established method of Government.

Nevertheless, how much soever this objection may be the real obstacle with men against the credibility of miracles, they may not know it themselves; for it is neither miraculous nor uncommon with us to mistake the true grounds of our persuasions: and we find it now backed with another, namely, that the case of the miracles they reject, is not the same with that of the acts of Omnipotence exerted in the formation of a world, or the creation of souls for children. For the first of these gave beginning to a system of nature not before existent, and the latter co-operate with the natural laws of generation to finish the work they must have left imperfect: but that a wise Governor should innovate upon the laws himself had provided, or break through them while subsisting unrepealed, still remains incredible.

To this I shall answer that all interposition does not make innovation in the laws established. What if water was once changed into wine, the laws of nature producing wine by the vine and the grape continue still the same. What if injunction was once given to cut off every soul of the Amalekites, the laws of humanity and mercy, of love even to enemies, still remain inviolate, and have been strongly inculcated by the same authority which issued the injunction. If we must be obliged to justify the ways of God by the proceedings of man, let us recollect there have been many suspensions of human laws upon particular occasions: we have known it done in our own times upon the Habeas Corpus act, that great barrier of our liberties, yet without derogating from the wisdom either of the law or the legislature.

And the interpositions now in question must appear less incredible when we consider the purpose for which they are supposed to have been made, not to supply defects in laws provided, but to manifest the dominion of the Governor: which it is notorious was so far overlooked, that many laboured arguments have been carried on in prose and verse, in seriousness and ridicule, to prove the laws self-ordained, without a legislature to enact them, or governor able to control them. Were there a kingdom so well policied as that all things might be kept in order everywhere by subordinate magistrates fully instructed in their duty; yet if the people in some distant corner, seeing nothing higher than constables and justices among them, should grow refractory, as thinking those officers acted upon their own authority, would it not be more than credible, that the prince should manifest himself by some signal interposition of power, to convince the mutineers of his dominion.

Then if we take the whole series of interpositions jointly, they may not unfitly be likened to those used in the formation of a world: for we may reflect how great an influence they have had upon the moral world which is a part of the natural, introducing a new system of thinking and acting, scarce less important than that formed at what is vulgarly called the creation, out of a chaos of ignorance, darkness, and uncertainty; or as the orthodox say, out of the ruins of an old system originally perfect.

From all these considerations I think it may be fairly concluded, that miracles are not essentially incredible, nor the evidences of them deserving to be rejected without hearing: and tho not discoverable by reason

founded on experience, yet neither are they contrary to reason, or experience, nor like the idle tale of a man who should pretend by his natural sagacity to have found out a method of flying about in the air; because we know the extent of human powers, and know that this exploit does not lie within them.

9. Nevertheless, credible as I have endeavoured to show them, I still hold them highly improbable; but that I may not give offence by being misapprehended, I must beg leave to explain my meaning in this position. It was not in my thought to pronounce upon the validity of the evidence offered in support of them, for it does not suit with the character I have assumed of a neutral, to determine anything concerning their probability in the manner wherein they are introduced for everybody's examination: all I intended was to assert that in themselves, divested of their external proofs, they are not easy to be credited. So that supposing I had never heard of any such thing till this day, and just now some learned man were to tell me he had met with a book wherein were reported the stories of the burning bush, the rod turned into a serpent, the recalling Lazarus to life, and such like, I should think them extremely improbable: and though upon mature reflection, not absolutely incredible (for perhaps on first hearing I might deem them so,) yet requiring very weighty and cogent evidence before I could believe them.

For experience is our proper guide, the foundation of all our knowledge; if we are to place no confidence in that, we have nothing to trust to: therefore all deviations therefrom deserve justly to be suspected as false appearances until confirmed by reasonings drawn from experience, for those may sometimes convince us, that things must have happened otherwise than we have experimented, as in the case of creation, which we never saw an instance of, yet we may gather from what we have seen, that there must have been such an operation, either in time or from everlasting. Had we miracles worked among us the case would be different, for then after being satisfied upon careful examination that our senses had not deceived us, we should have their experience to attest the truth of the fact; which is the same evidence we have for common phenomena: but our evidence of supernatural events comes only by relation and traditionary proof, and this we must weigh in the like manner as we do other things whereof we have not the direct testimony of our senses.

We cannot penetrate into the constitution of nature nor essence of things; we can only observe how they constantly operate in those instances wherewith we have familiar acquaintance, and what are the ordinary courses of Providence: which affords a just presumption, that nothing will fall out otherwise than we have experienced, and whatever relation varies therefrom must consequently be improbable, the improbability rising in proportion to the width of the variance. What has been may be, is a common saying, and a very just one: to which we may add, what has constantly happened in one manner may be presumed will always happen in the same, as being occasioned by certain causes which cannot operate otherwise. Therefore the operations of nature, so far as we have intimate acquaintance among them, raise a just expectation that they will always continue the same course, together with a persuasion, that they ever have done so from their beginning to work: and every relation of a supernatural event, being contrary to this persuasion, or, as commonly expressed, contradicting experience, is highly improbable in itself, not to be credited without the strongest evidence to justify our assent.

10. To ascertain what evidence suffices to overcome this improbability might be impossible, for certainty was not made for man, nor have we any one channel of knowledge to be depended upon as infallible: we can only collect our proofs on all sides, weighing and comparing them together carefully, and then every man must use his best judgment to determine upon the whole view of particulars. Undoubtedly the degree of improbability deserves its share in the estimation; for nobody in his sober senses would not credit one fact upon much slighter evidence than he should think necessary to establish the truth of another. Should a person unknown tell me there were two men boxing together in the next street, I might believe him, for such things happen every now and then among porters and carmen: should he add, that the combatants had the dress and appearance of gentlemen, I should think, to use the newspaper phrase, the thing merited confirmation; but if the like were told of two persons whom I knew to be men of grave deportment, good rank and character, there would need a host of witnesses to convince me of the fact.

Therefore, when we reflect on the just and natural weight of improbability, it seems rather too daring an enterprise of divines, when they undertake to prove their allegations, if we will only allow the Sacred Writings so much credit as we give to a common historian: for I cannot help joining with Middleton, that if some of the accounts recorded there were found only in Sanconiathon's Phenician History, no man of thought or learning would heed them, or at most regard them, otherwise than as fabulous and allegorical, concealing a moral which nobody now could develope. But this does not hurt their cause, for I suppose none of them will deny the authority of Moses and Matthew to be something better than that of Sanconiathon or Livy.

On the other hand, it is against nature that men should knowingly embrace or needlessly propagate error: they may frequently be led into it by delusion, or mislead others for designs of their own, but without some good ground of suspicion that these causes interfered, or rule remains valid. Therefore whatever is generally received, or sedulously inculcated by teachers of whom we have a good opinion, or strongly believed by the party himself upon former conviction of his understanding, though the motives be now forgotten, carries a just presumption of its being true, and anything offered in contradiction has its improbability too, for which he may reasonably demand of the free-thinker a good evidence sufficient to overcome the improbability, as the latter may demand of him good evidences sufficient to overcome the improbability of supernatural operation; and the evidences ought to be increased in proportion to the degrees of improbability.

11. This improbability of things happening out of the natural way, deserves the authority of a general rule, which if admitting of exceptions, yet is not invalidated thereby: but still ought to take place in every instance where there is not particular cogent evidence of an excepted case. Some people are so fond of miracle, they would give everything that construction: if once persuaded that a person has worked them, they will scarce allow him to do anything like other men. When the Jews took up stones to cast at Jesus, we are told he withdrew himself out of their sight; this the commentators will have to have been done miraculously; but surely any common man, having a troop of his friends behind him, might slip away among them without supernatural power. For my part, I think a backwardness to miracle more commendable, nor would I choose to construe anything such until I had tried all possible ways to account for it by natural causes.

A propensity to the miraculous draws on many pernicious and fatal consequences: it leads in the high road to enthusiasm, spiritual pride, censoriousness, and despondency upon finding the usual flood of illumination fall short; for indigestion, failing of spirits, and bodily infirmity, must not be natural: it gives narrow, unworthy notions of the Deity, debasing his Majesty, corrupting his Purity, and vitiating his Holiness, making him subject to unaccountable sudden turns of humour like men soothed with adoration and prone to take offence at trifles: it entirely takes away the use of reason, for there is no reason but only fancying upon the divine councils: and prevents that investigation of natural causes which might conduct to the soundest and manliest conception of his providence, and best grounded admiration of his wisdom in bringing his purposes to bear by a long-complicated succession of variously-working second causes. Then if spread among the vulgar, it drives them headlong into superstition of all idle terrifying kinds, dreams, prognostics, judgments, fatalities, conjurations, signs, visions, apparitions, and such like: so that they may be said scarce to be conversant among mankind, but to live in a fairy world inhabited by phantoms, spectres, and hobgoblins.

Upon contemplation of these evils we may find excuse for the free-thinker: for if, as may be concluded from the near resemblance of features between him and the bigot observed in Chap. VIII. he be of so unhappy a temperament as that he must run into extremes, having none other option than either to believe nothing or believe anything, it were difficult to say which of the two were the prudenter choice. And he seems sensible of his infirmity, as one may guess by his drawing the ridicule wherewith he continually pelts religion from the topics of vulgar superstition: as if he were conscious, that with his clumsy fingers he could not take Religion without taking, too, all the cobwebs and trumpery that have clung about it in some dirty corner of the nursery.

12. I have remarked just now two opposite improbabilities to be weighed against one another, that of anything being put out of its natural course, and that of sober wise men giving credit to such events without sufficient foundation; besides which there are many circumstances attendant upon these two, deserving a place in the scale, among which we may reckon the nature and tendencies of the event. If a man of honest, judicious character, but a little straightened in present cash, should receive a strong impression in a dream, that his deceased friend had bid him look under a particular bush standing near the path he intended to go along the next day, where he should find a purse of money: though he had no faith in dreams, it is very likely he might have the curiosity to poke about a little under the bush. If the direction had been to lay five guineas there, which on his returning again the day after he should find grown to a hundred, he would hardly care to run the risk: yet upon the advice being repeated four or five successive nights with pressing entreaties and expostulations, he might be tempted to try the experiment. But if he were commanded to break open a neighbour's house for the money with an assurance of the deed being lawful and safe, I imagine that he would require a better warrant than twenty dreams, before he would proceed to execution. In like manner if other persons had told him of having had such dreams, and found them accomplished in all points upon following their directions, he would want different degrees of evidence to convince him of their relations respectively being true.

Therefore where the facts reported are frivolous, unbecoming, or repug-

nant to our ideas of justice and mercy, they carry a higher degree of improbability upon that account: for though we have not so perfect a knowledge of what is agreeable to wisdom and goodness as to render everything appearing foolishness and evil incredible, yet we must and ought to give their due weight to the judgments of our understanding, that salutary guide given us from God for our general direction. Where the facts are indifferent and innocent, less urgent proofs will do. Where they appear important, conducive to some gracious purpose, well suiting with the dignity and character of the performer, a single witness of good repute, deposing upon his own knowledge, might suffice to gather our credit.

For this reason I apprehend it very material to take the internal evidence of a Religion into account in judging of the external: for where a system of doctrine esteemed highly beneficial to mankind, as tending to work an advantageous change in their sentiments and manners, is suggested to have been introduced by a series of supernatural interpositions, their improbability almost vanishes before hearing the particular testimonies alleged in support of them. And one may observe, that the external evidences, by the accounts transmitted to them, seem to have been purposely given in such measure as to weigh down the balance, or not, according to the degree of improbability remaining in the opposite scale. Therefore they do not suffice for Religion in her depravations, which cannot stand their ground with their pretences to fresh supernatural testimonies.

So the Papists still have miracles among them: and whoever will drudge through the journals of our Methodists cannot help seeing they endeavour to persuade the world of Miraculous Providences, and a divine interposition perpetually accompanying them, as well in their spiritual as common transactions: so you must needs venerate them as Apostles, not for the sacredness of their doctrine, but because the hand of God manifests itself so signally in their favour. But in proportion to the purity and genuineness of a Religion taught, it stands in less need of additional testimonies to cast the balance on its side. Therefore it is a circumstance in favour of our divines, that they make no pretences to supernatural illuminations nor wonder-working powers, but undertake to maintain their cause by the old ones remaining upon record. Nobody can well doubt the power of God to have given more striking evidences than he has done: and we may regard it as an instance of his wisdom, that he has given them in such just proportion as to take effect where they ought, and to fail where it is best they should fail, that is, according as the Religion understood to be attested by them is, or is not, beneficial.

But we must take with us, that the essence of Religion lies in the sentiments of the mind and dispositions of the heart, not in any form of words or articles of belief which may raise very various and opposite apprehensions in different persons. Now if we examine what idea the free-thinker entertains of our established Religion, we shall find it a bundle of superstitions, absurdities, tyranny, and priestcraft, carrying such an improbability of being the work of God, as perhaps no reasonable man would think overcome by the evidences alleged: therefore it is a mercy to the unbeliever, that these evidences are not more glaring, because they might mislead him into a Religion he is much better without, than if he received it in that disfigured state whereunto it has been cast by his misapprehension.

13. Then the other improbability, of relations being made or defended and gaining ground without sufficient evidence, may likewise receive abatement by the circumstances found to attend it. Interest may engage men

to impose upon others, and the desire of ingratiating with the powerful or the populace, raise defenders to an opinion they do not believe. Good policy will sometimes suggest inventions to keep an ignorant people in order, who could not be brought to see the benefit of regularity and concord: and the reputation of an able disputant urges some to maintain a point without ever considering it calmly. Notions early imbibed, and never called in question among the company usually conversed with, or having a connection with the profession engaged in, will often give a secret bias to the honestest minds to support what they esteemed the common cause. A fondness for the miraculous, interwoven in many constitutions, has a surprising efficacy upon the imagination, changing the nature of things, and making their very improbability a motive for believing them. I have myself heard stories of apparitions, deaths foreboded by the party being seen in two places at once, and the like, upon testimony that would have convinced me of any common fact without leaving the least shadow of doubt, and this by persons who I was satisfied had no artifice nor intention to deceive me. And when this happens to be the national humour, one may expect it should run far greater lengths than we can have experienced in this country of reason and ridicule, which for once may very properly join in alliance against such an enemy.

But where such propensity is seconded by religious zeal, it is easy to imagine what wonders they may work by their united force, perverting the senses to give false evidence, falsifying the records of the memory, making men undesignedly add circumstances that never happened to a real transaction, pick up stories from anybody upon the slightest foundation, and report them again confidently as of their own knowledge. For every miracle full evidenced would be an incontestible proof of the being and dominion of a God, therefore all remissness in believing or defending it is looked upon as the sin of Atheism: which produces a positiveness and eagerness of assertion that nothing can compare with, except party zeal. Now whoever would go through a full and fair examination of supernatural history, ought to take all these things into consideration, and give them each their just and proper weight in determining his judgment.

14. It is not my business to apply any of these circumstances, nor to poise their respective weights in particular cases, for this belongs rather to ecclesiastical history and knowledge of the world than to philosophy: it would be carrying the shoe-maker beyond his last, and encroaching upon the province of divines. They may please to consider, it is service enough for one private man to have acted as pioneer, endeavouring to level that intrenchment of absolute incredibility wherewith the enemy used to keep them at a distance, so that they may come directly to a general action: and to have reminded them of the several quarters in the adverse camp, that they may take care to make the action general, and not in the hurry of pursuit leave vacant spaces unoccupied, where the enemy rallying from time to time may renew the fight unexpectedly.

For I would wish to have the faith of mankind compact and solid throughout: sound not only in the articles believed, but in the foundations for believing. It is not unprecedented for men to build a real truth on hollow ground, in which case their faith is rather good fortune than good conduct, and will be apt to shake and totter grievously in the storms of opposition, or batteries of ridicule. If I have any title to meddle with the merits of the cause, it must be in that part respecting the internal evidence, which we observed before has a just and strong weight in the determination, and

probably does actually cast the balance with most persons: but Religion, as has been already remarked, does not consist so much in a set of articles, as in the sense impressed by them upon the mind: so that the same outward form of profession may contain very different Religions, some frivolous, absurd, and wicked, others noble, rational, and holy, accordingly as diversely understood or apprehended in the mind of the hearer. Therefore what I am next going upon may be of some moment towards determining the judgment, which is to attempt explaining some of the orthodox tenets by the theory I have endeavoured to sketch out in this work upon the principles of human reason, aiming to find out such a sense of them, without violence or wrestling, as may coincide or prove reconcilable therewith. By which whoever happens to come into my explanations will see what degree of improbability still remains for the divine to overcome by skilful management of his weapons of external evidence.

15. Before I quit this subject, it may not be amiss to bestow a little consideration upon the design of miracles, so far as discoverable to our apprehension. The interposition of Omnipotence in the formation of a world and the daily creation of Souls for children, were made essential parts in the original constitution of universal nature, without which the rest of the divine plan would have remained imperfect, nor could have taken effect. For without the former, neither this Earth we inhabit, nor the productions formed therein, could have had a being, and without the latter the race of men could not be preserved upon earth: so that those may be ranked among the principal lines of the plan necessary to support and sustain one another. But these, how much soever esteemed the immediate work of God, are not vulgarly styled miracles: for if a hundred young fellows and a hundred girls of vigorous constitutions intermarry, it would be thought more a miracle if they did not produce a living child among them at the twelvemonth's end, than that they should produce many: what are commonly understood as miracles can scarcely be thought necessary to carry on the courses of nature, or supply any defects in the provisions made for them. We cannot well imagine a rod changed into a serpent, because there were not serpents enow generated in the natural way, nor water turned into wine to prevent interruption in the innocent jollities of a wedding: such motives must appear of too little importance and dignity to give motion to the arm of Omnipotence.

Therefore we suppose none other intention of miracles than to work upon the minds of men; they were anciently called signs and wonders, their very name by its Latin derivation implies a thing to be wondered at, as the Greek term Thauma does a thing to be stared at, and they are frequently declared to have been performed for manifesting the power of God. We may know likewise upon the authority of Saint Paul, if not by our own understanding, that the contemplation of visible nature would lead to the knowledge of God, if duly attended to, but men in general were so immersed among sensible objects, and the pursuit of their pleasures and private interests, that they could never rise to a competent degree of that knowledge, so we may conclude the principal design of miracles was to supply the defect of clearness in their understandings. There may be another use of them for giving credence to express messengers sent upon some particular errand, but this relates only occasionally to the persons who were to receive the message: so the general purpose of them remains none other than to impress a sense of the being, the power, and dominion of God upon the hearts of mankind.

Therefore miracles were most plentifully employed in the earliest and ignorant ages, and have gradually decreased as men improved in observation and knowledge. The Angels conversed familiarly upon earth no longer than the patriarchal times, but afterwards appeared very rarely, upon solemn and extraordinary occasions: Urim and Thummim scarce held throughout the Jewish monarchy: prophecy ceased upon the coming of Christ, and some doctors hold all other supernatural powers died with the Apostles; at least, I may say, without offence in this land of freedom, there has been nothing of miracle, prophecy, or revelation for the last thousand years, but we are left to the records of ancient days, and those subject to many disputations upon their authenticity. From this method of proceeding in the government of the moral world, we may gather that mankind in successive generations stands less and less in need of signs and wonders; and what supernatural operation may still be judged requisite for us is dispensed by the secret imperceptible influences of the Comforter, promised to be our light and director.

But we are not to expect he will operate in a visible, sensible manner, nor to look for him in transports and ecstacies, and sudden flashes of illumination. We are told his office lies in teaching us all things, but ecstacy and transport are not methods of teaching: he conveys instruction to us through the channel of our own understanding, and what lights he vouchsafes to afford seem to us the discoveries of our own understanding. Wherefore it behoves us to make an honest, humble, industrious use of this faculty, upon which we may depend with more assurance than our forefathers, since we have the promise of so powerful an assistant to make up for its natural infirmities: and perhaps when he shall have finished his work, even the remembrance of former miracles may be innocently and harmlessly dropped. Upon these considerations it must be acknowledged, that our cotemporary divines act prudently in being less copious upon those topics than their predecessors, but applying themselves principally to clear and open that channel by which alone we now receive our spiritual food, reserving their externals for such who could not otherwise be brought to that just and lively sense of the divine dominion and attributes, and habitual dependence upon Providence, which are the grand sources of human happiness, both in this world and that which is to come.

CHAP. XII.

GRACE.

Although our Church acknowledges miracles to be ceased, nevertheless I take it to be one of her principal doctrines, that the Spirit of God, or more properly God the holy Ghost, does still operate upon men, enabling them to discern truths and exert a vigour of mind in the performance of good works they could not have done by their natural powers. Nor is this a contradiction to the cessation of miracles any more than the doctrine of creating souls for children, because such assistance is necessary to work out our salvation: but we have seen before, that miracle is understood of signs and wonders whose principal use is none other than to strike upon the senses; whereas this supernatural operation is of indispensable use, per-

formed upon that account and not as an evidence of anything else, but itself requires other evidence to prove its reality.

I have nothing to do with the proofs of there being such a divine interposition; those I suppose must be drawn from the sacred Scriptures, and left to the management of divines: no more belongs to me than to examine what we are to understand when we hear them talk of the grace of God, and tell us that no good thing can be done effectually without it: for it would be too hasty to reject, and of little service to adopt, what they say, until we have gotten a competent knowledge of the matter alleged. Now to gain a clearer conception, and avoid the perplexities consequent upon taking a subject too much in the gross, let us consider separately the effect produced in the mind at seasons of grace, and what causes may be supposed to produce that effect. But these, too, merit a distinct inquiry, yet are commonly blended together under the same term: for we speak of a man having grace, which must denote the state of his understanding and temper of his mind. or the degree of activity exerted, and of this being owing to the grace of God, which must refer to the act of the donor.

2. Nobody can miss observing what varieties there are in the clearness of his faculties and vigour of his spirits fitting him for any common business, profession, science, or enterprise he can undertake, more at one time than another. Sometimes he finds himself tasteless, inactive, and dull: he strives and toils without making any progress, all is task, and burden, and blunder, nor can he do his work to satisfy himself: another, while he sees everything at a glance, his scenes appear full, his objects distinct and lively, he proceeds with ease and dexterity, his labour becomes an entertainment, he feels himself carried along by an impulse almost whether he will or no. All this in times of ignorance and darkness was described to the heavenly powers: Apollo, or Hercules, or Mercury were invoked upon every important occasion to lend their present aid according to the nature of the enterprise to be gone upon.

And we still figuratively, though not superstitiously, speak of inspirations almost as currently as the Ancients: the hero is inspired with ardour in battle, the politician with schemes of public utility, the orator with eloquence, and the poet with enthusiasm; nor do we want to be taught the expedience of Horace's precept; Thou shalt do and say nothing against the good will of Minerva.

This particular aptitude for the work in hand we may reckon the genus, whereof grace, considered as an effect, is the species. We may sometimes find our understandings clear to discern the subjects of divinity, to look forward into futurity, perceiving things there with the lively colours of present objects, having an unconfused though incomplete conception of Goodness, of Equity of universal Providence, rejoicing in its protection, satisfied with its proceedings, earnest to perform laudable actions; going through our duties with taste and pleasure: these I take to be the seasons of grace. Then again we become cold and heavy, or dragged along forcibly by appetite and worldly pursuits, immersed in temporal engagements, scarce able to raise a thought of anything superior to natural causes, backward to practise what we know, tempted to murmur, to despond, to doubt of the divine goodness, or think it of little avail to ourselves: whenever this happens, we may look upon grace as withdrawn.

Thus the reality of the fact is certain beyond all denial: continual experience testifies that there are such variations as above mentioned in the

state of our understanding and alertness of our activity, which if anybody shall choose to express by some other term than grace, this makes no alteration in the case; for names cannot alter the nature of things, but they will be still the same, whatever denomination you rank them under. Therefore the effects meant by those who employ the word grace, and its efficacy, cannot be controverted; nor that we shall proceed to very little purpose in any exercises of Religion or morality, when we have it not in some measure upon us; so it remains to inquire what are the causes to which this effect may be owing.

We shall find nothing in experience or human reason to hinder, but that it may spring from the same sources with the other effects of similar kind taken notice of above; for we have the same lucid seasons of comprehension and energy of action come upon us to carry us through the functions of our profession, our investigations of science, and even our amusements: the enthusiasm of the poet differs nothing from the pious ardour of the saint in essence and quality, though it does greatly in value and importance. Yet those are never now ascribed to divine interposition, but deemed to proceed from the present state of the brain, condition of the bodily humours, external encouragements, converse with persons of similar turn, sight of inviting examples, or other natural causes. Nevertheless, the greater importance of religious inspiration above all others makes a very considerable difference, and justifies us in ascribing it, though remotely, through a long chain of second causes, to the act and purpose of God as a providential event. For we have seen in CHAP. VI. that although all things fall out by the divine provision, yet those only wherein we can find some apparent benefit and visible mark of goodness are to be esteemed providential, and more so according to the greatness of the benefit discerned. Therefore we may deservedly give this inspiration the name of Grace, as a signal and inestimable favour to the receiver, the word being derived from a Latin term signifying Favour.

3. But though our almighty Governor wants neither power nor skill to complete all his purposes, and effectually confer all his favours, by the wise disposition of second causes on their first establishment, so as that both the natural and moral world may run on its destined course in every minute particular, without needing the further touch of his hand, yet on the other hand we have seen in the Chapter on Providence, there is nothing inconsistent with our ideas of the Attributes in supposing him purposely to have left room in the plan for his own interpositions at such times as he judged proper: whence the effusion of grace by supernatural operation carries no greater weight of improbability to be drawn up by positive evidence in the opposite scale, than what hangs to every fact whereof experience and reason can give us no assurance. So the field lies open to divines to produce what proofs they have in store in support of their allegation as of a credible point to which reason has no repugnance.

We may remember further as was remarked in the same Chapter, it is reasonable to think that God has adapted his courses of Providence to the condition and occasions of his intelligent creatures, making the natural, the moral, and the supernatural systems, harmonize and mutually correspond with one another: therefore the generality of mankind being so circumstanced as that the thought of his dominion and superintending Providence might be lost without an opinion of his being present and directly operating among them, affords a degree of probability that he does so operate.

If the divines think this argument of any weight, they are heartily welcome to it: the point it tends to confirm being of so great consequence, that a prudent man would be glad to give any helps, which may be of service. What though he can himself apprehend the moral world administered by a long complicated tissue of natural causes, reaching from the first establishment of nature, he must be sensible that many cannot follow him in this thought: but it is of the utmost moment that they should have a lively sense of a Providence presiding over their thoughts and actions, especially those relating to their spiritual concerns. Therefore the grand important point to inculcate is this, that grace comes from God, the manner how it comes is rather matter of speculation, unless so far as necessary to satisfy of the other: then let every man believe it to come in such manner as he can comprehend, lest if you disturb him in this circumstance, he should not believe it to come from God at all.

4. Yet as the best things corrupted become the worst, and the most salutary opinion may, by a little perversion or extravagance, turn into a poisonous notion, therefore it is of most dangerous tendency for a man to persuade himself he perceives the divine interposition actually operating upon him. There are those who fancy themselves too cunning for the Spirit of God; he means to give his influences secretly, but they can find him out; they can see the flashes of illumination and feel the floods of inspiration poured upon them immediately from the divine hand; they can give an exact history of all his motions from the very day and hour when he first touched their hearts, converting them from obdurate sinners into the children of heaven. It were scarce credible, had we not examples among our cotemporaries, to what wild lengths of superstition and enthusiasm these fancies will carry men: debasing the Majesty of God, creating spiritual pride, and a superlative contempt of their fellow-creatures.

For though we know God is omnipresent, alike powerful everywhere, and wants not largeness of intelligence to act in any one particular place without disregarding all others, yet this is by much too vast an idea for our comprehension: if we conceive him familiarly present and immediately operating upon ourselves, we shall unavoidably fall into an apprehension of his being absent or regardless elsewhere, and insensibly nourish a conceit of being peculiar favourites, but all others in a manner outlawed from his providence, to be regarded as aliens rather than compatriots. But there are degrees of extravagance, and I am apt to suspect that many pious Christians, especially of the female sex, though not running those lengths, yet do a little surpass the bounds of moderation: therefore they can never be too much upon their guard against the notion of perceiving the immediate operations of the holy Ghost whereinto they are unwarily drawn by a common figure of speech, the Metonyme, of taking a cause for the effect.

In extraordinary events affecting the state of kingdoms, or Religion, or private families, or particular persons, we may be said with propriety to see the Finger of Heaven, because the natural causes which brought them about receive their disposition from the touch of that finger. We are very properly said to receive our daily bread from the Hand of Heaven, because, the fertility of soils and industry of man, supplying plenty of bread to be found in every baker's shop, derived originally from that hand. So with the same propriety we may speak of feeling the grace of God in our understandings and hearts, because our Church instructs us to ascribe it to his interposing among second causes, yet without idea of an immediate opera-

tion at the instant time of feeling; for I apprehend the orthodox doctrine of grace carries no such sense.

We are taught upon a higher authority that the wind bloweth where it listeth, thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit:——that is, if I may be admitted to offer an interpretation, in the pangs of a spiritual birth the patient sensibly feels the effects, but knows nothing of when, or in what part the touch was given. Or if I may presume to illustrate further, I would compare the effusion of grace to a plentiful shower in a dry summer: if you go out immediately you will see the turfs still russet, the leaves hanging lank, and the fruits wrinkled; but look again a day or two after, and everything appears lively, vigorous, and flourishing. Therefore, if a man, after long confinement to his bed by sickness, should, upon looking out at window, discover an unusual verdure, he may conclude that it has rained, not that it actually does rain: so if, after a season of thoughtlessness, you perceive your understanding on a sudden lively to discern, and your will vigorous to pursue heavenly things, you may orthodoxly conclude there has been an effusion, not that there is one now.

One way of grace coming is, we are told, by hearing; but when you are touched with a sermon, the influence is transmitted to you through the natural channel of human eloquence: so the effusion was never poured upon you at all, but upon the preacher some time before he composed the discourse, which it may be was done a year ago. Well, but you have heard the same sermon before without being affected by it in like manner, so the difference must be owing to some alteration in yourself: this I can easily believe, for I have myself read treatises of divinity, of metaphysics, of mathematics, orations, histories, tales, Homer, Virgil, and Milton, with very different degrees of emolument, taste, and emotion. But if we are instructed to believe the particular effectingness of a religious discourse proceeds from the workings of the spirit, why must the operation exciting those workings be instantaneous and immediate? The spirit is the same God with him who established the courses of nature, and accomplishes distant purposes surely by their mechanical motions: has he then in his person of the spirit so little command over second causes that he cannot prepare them in a manner to excite grace in the heart long after his operation ceases, but to have the work well done, must do it himself? Since then we cannot pretend to limit the power nor wisdom of the Spirit, and have found such mischief spring from an opinion of his immediate operations being discernible by the senses, it were much safer to entertain no such opinion.

5. The thought of a present Deity working upon us is an intoxicating thought; how much soever it may soothe the young beginner at first, the indulgence of it is extremely dangerous: it is like a fatigued, thirsty man putting his mouth to the brandy bottle; he may design only a moderate cordial, but can never be sure how much more than is good for him will not slip down his throat. Therefore as I did before in the Chapter on Providence, I shall now again recommend to every man to remove the finger of God from him, as far as he can without letting it go beyond the reach of his comprehension; if he believes the grace in his heart owing to a supernatural interposition of the Spirit, still he may place a line of second causes between the act of God and the effect he feels. By practice in any science or way of performance we strengthen our faculties, so as clearer to discern and readier to execute new matters of similar kind after considerable in-

termission; and expertness, though gradually acquired, commonly shows itself complete at some particular time; nor is it inconceivable that the divine interposition may work a like alteration in the faculties, giving them a clearness and vigour not to be attained by natural means, but to lie dormant until the occasion offers for using them. Therefore if any man must frame some particular imagination concerning the manner of the Spirit's working, which yet he might more prudently forbear, let him suppose it done by acting upon his organs in his sleep, or at some former time when he did not perceive it.

Those who have gone through a grammar school must remember that sometimes, on the evening before a repetition day, they have striven and toiled for several hours to get their task by heart, but to no purpose, being unable at bed-time to repeat a single sentence right; nevertheless, awaking in the morning, they have often found it ready at their tongue's end, so that they could go through the whole currently without mistake or hesitation. Now I do not offer this as an instance of supernatural grace, for it would be almost blasphemy against the Holy Ghost to believe him employed in so trifling a service as to help a school-boy in saying his lesson: I only mention it in order to introduce another case which may be thought worthy his assistance. Suppose then I had an intimate friend whom I greatly loved and esteemed, but who had fallen into some gross and fatal error on the fundamentals of Religion. After many unsuccessful attempts to reclaim him, I wish to introduce an able divine, whom I know to be a man of sound knowledge and judgment, better skilled in managing those points than myself: but my friend has taken an utter distaste to all parsons, and will not hear one of them being brought to talk with him. What then have I else to do but wait upon the doctor, in order to gather such information from him as I may employ afterwards myself in the best manner I am able? Accordingly, I obtain a conference, and receive such a scheme of argumentation as I think cannot fail of taking effect, if I could but convey it unbroken: but it is long, consisting of many particulars, and intricate; so as to make it difficult to be retained in mind without losing any of that clearness of explanation and closeness of deduction wherein its efficacy must consist. On coming home I endeavour to recollect what I had heard, and fix everything upon my memory in the proper order and colours wherewith it had been delivered, but after many hours' toil and labour, find I can make out nothing regular or satisfactory; so am forced, like the school-boy, to go to bed in desperation of doing any good: nevertheless, in the morning I have the whole occurring to my thoughts spontaneously, in the full vigour and precision I could wish, and applying it immediately to my unhappy friend, thereby cure him effectually of his error.

Now if I am persuaded upon the authority of the Church, that the divine assistance must have been afforded to make me instrumental in the saving of a soul, when am I to believe the help was given? Surely not when I felt its effects in the morning, for there is no difficulty in reading the traces of one's memory when clear and vivid: this I can do by my own strength without supernatural aid: it is no more than repeating the Lord's prayer or anything else one is familiarly acquainted with. Is it not more rational to suppose the Spirit aiding the preceding day, while I took so much pains in a good work, without perceiving any progress made therein? But he knew, though I did not, that the pains then taking would, by his co-operating influence, cast my mental organs into such a state, as that by their mechanical workings in my sleep they should range themselves

exactly in the order wanted, which they have a quality of doing, as has been remarked before in CHAP. X. § 4, of the First Volume.

6. For I take it likewise to be orthodox that the Spirit does nothing for us by himself, but only co-operates with our endeavours; we must try, or no effect will ensue: so the effect must appear to be produced by our own powers, and so indeed it always is, but with the secret influence supplying their insufficiency of strength. This excludes all spontaneous illuminations which we have done nothing ourselves to procure, and all irresistible grace forcing upon us against our Will. We may consider further, that the Spirit does not act upon our bodily powers, he never invigorates our muscles to give us more than human strength, nor purges our optics to make us see objects in the dark: but confines his aid to helping us in our spiritual concerns by supplying us with grace.

Now though I have hitherto applied the term Grace, considered as an effect, to clearness of apprehension and strength to perform good works, in compliance with the current language, and to avoid the obscurity arising from needless abstractions, yet in strictness these things are not grace itself, but the fruits of it. For piety and goodness, though best evidenced by good works, do not consist in them: it is the disposition and habit of the mind, properly termed grace, which makes a man good: and this he must have before he can perform good works, though he cannot know it himself without that proof. The grace is a permanent quality abiding with him in his sleep, at his meals, his diversions, at other times when he has no opportunity of exercising it, and prior to the pious thoughts and actions which first warrant us to pronounce it subsisting. But this grace was the effect of his former endeavours to attain it, assisted by the Spirit co-operating with him at the time of exerting them; which endeavours must be repeated to acquire a habit, and so frequently prove ineffectual that he can never know they have succeeded, and consequently can never know the Spirit has co-operated, until, upon subsequent trial, he discovers their effects after the operation has ceased.

Hence it appears from the nature of the thing, that the notion of discerning an immediate effusion of the Spirit, or feeling the finger of God move upon our hearts, has no manner of foundation; for the impulses of grace are nothing else than the spontaneous workings of a habit, or vigorous state of our faculties, acquired by our own well-applied industry; nor have we evidence of anything co-operating with that industry, either from experience or elsewhere, unless what can be drawn from the written oracles and arguments urged upon them. After full conviction worked upon a man this way, that no good thing, efficacious to secure his spiritual interests, can be thought or done without supernatural assistance, then indeed he may have experimental knowledge of the Spirit's co-operating, and feel the power of God upon his heart; because he may experience effects which he is already persuaded could not have been produced by his natural powers, without an additional strength thrown into them by divine interposition.

7. Those among us who pretend to extraordinary illuminations and supernatural powers, may be perceived extremely willing to have them taken for divine testimonies to their doctrines and practices: but they do not reflect, as indeed they seldom do anything with reflection, that herein they change their very nature, bringing them to rank under the class of signs and wonders, that is, direct miracles, worked not so much for their immediate uses as for manifestation of the divine power to such as could not be made

sensible of it any other way; whereas the assistance of the Comforter was promised for the necessary uses of the receiver, nor can serve as a manifestation, because not credited by the bystander unless convinced before, of the power of God working this way, upon Scripture authority. The same authority indeed testifies that the Spirit did operate miraculously upon the Apostles at the feast of Pentecost and upon several other occasions: but this was for the introduction of a new Religion, since when, say our doctors, such operations have totally ceased.

When were miracles ever employed for removing the corruptions of Religion since it has been an old one? Are our modern innovations of greater importance than the Reformation? Yet that work of God went on without signs and wonders, and still continues going on, if we may gather from the very recent disbandment of that body-guard of Popery the Jesuits. Our first reformers claimed no miraculous illuminations nor extraordinary powers, but could execute what work God in his wisdom judged needful for them to do, with the ordinary assistance of the Comforter afforded to every pious Christian seeking it honestly, diligently, and humbly, not saying arrogantly within himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as this publican.

However, since it is in vain to reason with people who make a merit of despising reason, but they will continue obstinate in holding the revival of miracles, I would wish them to be very careful in distinguishing the genuine from the spurious; for they may remember that, when God works his miracles, he permits other powers, at the same time, not commissioned from him, to work theirs. When Moses turned his rod into a serpent, the Egyptian magicians turned theirs into serpents likewise: while oracles were delivered forth from before the ark, the witch of Endor called up Samuel from the grave by necromancy: while Micaiah declared the Word of the Lord, Satan knew whom to inspire for Ahab to go up to battle against the Syrians: while Jesus healed all manner of diseases the devils could troop by legions into the body of a demoniac, and being driven from thence impel the swine by thousands to run violently down a precipice into the sea. Therefore, those who believe miraculous illuminations renewed among them, have reason to expect that delusions will be intruded in their company: they know very well who can upon occasion transform himself into an angel of light, so that the apparent operations of the holy Spirit may be counterfeit; for it is not unlikely that some Devil of perverseness or vanity may work such wonders, as will if possible deceive even the elect. They ought not then to be over hasty and confident in their inward feelings, but take Saint Paul's advice to try every spirit before they trust him; and study calmly the doctrine of touches, that they may not be imposed upon to mistake the cloven foot, for the finger of God.

8. We may observe likewise, that there are means of grace, and ways of quenching the Spirit, and men are said to grieve the holy Spirit: by these expressions some people are led inconsiderately to fancy themselves of importance with God, as if they could merit his favour, or disappoint him as they pleased. But they must entertain a very unworthy opinion of him, as subject to human passions, to imagine they can stir up either fondness or vexation in him by anything they do; such imaginations may be indulged to persons of gross apprehension, who can rise no higher than the ideas exhibited by one another, and can think of God no otherwise, than as a very good and powerful man, living somewhere above the clouds: but those who pretend to more light than all the rest of mankind, ought to know that

grieving is an exoteric term designed only for the vulgar, to touch their affections with the suggestion of ingratitude to their protector and best benefactor.

The other phrases of quenching the spirit, and using the means of grace, must relate to the spirit of grace in us, considered as an effect of some prior cause: for it cannot be conceived that the act of God may be frustrated, or rendered effectual by anything of our doing. But we are to understand thereby, that any good disposition of mind or vigour of resolution we possess, here called grace and spirit, may be weakened or destroyed by our ill conduct or neglect; and were acquired by means of our own using, with the divine assistance co-operating, not acting as a distinct agent, but adding energy to the powers we exert. Therefore it behoves us to study carefully what are the means of grace, and practise them sedulously, and we shall find they are such as have a natural tendency to procure the temper of mind we desire; for the Spirit of God does no more than assist nature where she falls deficient, it never counteracts or controls her.

So then our business is to examine our nature, our wants, and our powers, using our best reason for applying the one to the other: the same measures of conduct will be expedient as if there were no supernatural interposition; the only, though very material difference this makes is in the success, not the choice, nor the prudence of our proceedings. Only we must take care to inform our reason by what lights we can gather from any quarter, still employing our judgment in choosing our guides, interpreting their directions, and applying them to particular occasions; and if we manage well and honestly in all these points, we may rest assured both from reason and promise, that should any further assistance be necessary, God will graciously afford it us in as ample a manner as he sees requisite.

CHAP. XIII.

TRINITY.

We come now to the most mysterious article of the Christian faith, the hardest of digestion to the reasoner, esteemed most sacred by the orthodox, and acknowledged incomprehensible by both: which we are taught to regard as the grand fundamental of our Religion, to be received upon the Word of God with a reverential awe and submission, not to be curiously pried into.

I have sometimes, in entering upon knotty inquiries, introduced them with an invocating prelude, to render the spirits more alert by entertainment, and draw attention to drier matters behind. But this is not a subject to be trifled with, nor disfigured by rhetorical flourishes. The spirit of solid reason, and the spirit of grace, will not be conjured down from above by invocations: they are to be obtained none otherwise than by application of the natural means for procuring them; trusting for the success to the Disposer of all events, who best knows what human undertakings require assistance, or are of importance enough to receive it.

Those natural means I take to be an honest industry, a sincere desire of doing service, an unaffected humility, a becoming courage tempered with more than filial reverence, but clear of slavish fears, which would render all our powers useless. He that wrapped up his talent in a napkin, did it

because he was afraid: but the delivery of the talent is our proper call to the work that may be performed with it, for we have no ground to expect an extraordinary call manifested to our senses upon any occasion. Then let every man carefully survey the talents entrusted with him, as likewise in what service there appears a probability of succeeding, be it to ever so small a degree: and this is the task he is called upon to finish.

Men in general have strongly taken part on the side of orthodoxy or against it, they never enter upon a controverted point without a pre-contracted zeal either to maintain or overthrow it: this I have always industriously avoided, having never engaged in disputes, and I hope given evidence of a neutrality or rather friendliness to both parties in the former course of these inquiries. I have no temporal interests to serve, no honours to expect, no vanity to gratify by fighting on either side: it is nothing to me whether the world be Christian or philosophic, further than as either may be really more conducive to present or future happiness: I have already shown some practice in abstruse and knotty disquisitions, and some exercise in the methods of explanation and illustration; both which we seldom see the same person endeavouring to unite, those who think the deepest taking little care to express themselves clearest. Upon this survey of my small stock, I seem to myself not totally unqualified for my present enterprise, wherein if I can proceed with the natural means above mentioned, I need not stand in terror of that power whose displeasure is most to be dreaded, notwithstanding the sacredness of the subject. For I am sure of finding, not only righteous judgment but mercy with him, and though I fail in the honest attempt, he will not be extreme to mark what is amiss, but accept the will for the deed.

Before the judgment-seat of men, who are ever forward to judge another's servant without considering that to his own master he standeth or falleth, I have less expectation of an acquittal: the man of zealous piety regards all examination of religious mysteries as a profanation, as a touching the ark of God with unhallowed hands: the man of reason looks upon every mention of them, otherwise than in the light of an exploded absurdity or unintelligible jargon, as a certain mark of weakness in the intellects unable to throw off the impressions of the nurse and the school-master. I have more respect for my fellow-creatures than will suffer me to remain indifferent of their estimation, or not to wish for their favourable opinion; yet can bear the thought of hazarding their censure in prosecution of what to me carries the appearance of a duty. So shall go on my own way without trepidation, careful to offer nothing shocking either to Religion or reason, desirous, not uneasily anxious, to stand approved in the eyes of others for the allowableness of my attempt, whatever they may judge of the success.

But that they may not expect more than I have in my intention I must remind them that, as in the articles hitherto touched upon, so in handling this, I shall not enter into the evidences of its truth and reality; for I do not apprehend it discoverable, or capable of being proved by the light of nature, nor does it become me to decide upon the interpretation of texts alleged in support of it: I am only to seek for a rational construction of the doctrine taught as orthodox in the Church, so as to leave it a thing credible, but not to be credited without some more positive proof than that of reason having no repugnance against it. Such credibility surely cannot hurt the cause, for I presume there is nobody now willing to cry out with Tertullian and Beveridge, I believe because it is impossible: so this argu-

ment drawn from the impossibility may very well be spared without detriment to my compatriots, who seem rather a little too inclined to make their want of comprehension an irrefragable evidence against the truth of a fact.

But there are mysteries in visible nature, in the impulses causing gravitation and cohesion, in the vital circulations, in voluntary action carried on by instruments which we perceive not what they be, nor where they lie, nor with what limbs they connect: therefore they may well be mysteries in the divine nature. Nevertheless, I am for leaving as little mysterious as possible, and though I must not expect to comprehend everything it may be proper for me to admit, yet it seems rather commendable to comprehend as much as I can.

2. There is no occasion to take pains in setting out the doctrine, we may refer to the three creeds appointed to be read in our Churches: the grand objection commonly made to them is, that they impose upon us the belief of three being one, which is contrary to the clearest principles of our reason. For numbers are the most distinct and steady of all our ideas; we know that a million and one is more than a million, nor find ourselves liable to mistake the one number for the other: but our knowledge of all other things so nearly proportioned to one another is inaccurate and fluctuating, unless where we can express them by numbers. Therefore if we may not trust our understanding in discerning the difference between one and three, it must lose all credit with us whatever, nor can we trust it to judge upon the arguments brought in support of this very article: for I am not more sure that I read the creeds in my common-prayer book, nor that I know what they enjoin me to believe, than that one number is not another.

Now I shall not undertake to defend the point objected against, but must give it up as directly contrary to reason: the only question is, whether it is to be found in our creeds. Our divines, I dare answer, will none of them say that number three is number one: Athanasius affirms no such thing, for he tells us expressly that one God is not three Gods, nor are three Persons one Person, and pronounces it a damnable heresy to believe either. But this, say the objectors, mends the matter very little, for if there be three Persons each of whom is God, there must be three Gods, for you will not pretend them to be component parts making up a God among them: on the other hand, if there be only one God, there can be but one Person who is God. So the difference is only in words, and the position, we are enjoined under such terrible threatenings to believe, remains the same in substance as that number three is number one: but it is impossible for us to believe contradictions, therefore inconsistent to admit any argument in proof of them, whether from authority or otherwise.

As to the impossibility of believing contradictions, I much question the fact, and whether it would not puzzle the objectors themselves to show, either that nobody ever believed the Trinity, or that all who did, have understood it in a sense that carries no contradiction: at least I apprehend, that instances might be produced of men holding contradictory propositions where the opposition was not very glaring, and upon matters whereof their ideas were a little obscure and confused.

Many who think themselves very knowing persons, apprehend bodies to have an attractive or repulsive quality inherent in them: yet what is more contrary to reason than that a body should act in places where it is not, or that action in the abstract should go out from the agent to operate at immense distances, large as that from the Sun to the Earth? It was but

the other day a friend of mine was accused of utter ignorance in physiology for maintaining that, upon the parts of a human body joining in vital union, there was not a new substance produced more than was existing before they came together: the corporealist, universally, and I doubt not many orthodox Christians, believe a man to be one individual substance having a personality, not communicable to any other individual, yet that the many substances of his limbs and other parts are this individual; nay more, that after losing a leg or an arm, he still continues the same individual substance he was before. Now what is this, almost universal belief of an individual compound, better than believing that number ten thousand is number one, and if you subtract five hundred, the remaining nine thousand five hundred is still the same number one?

If we attentively observe the apprehensions of the vulgar among us, I believe they will be found both Tritheists and Unitarians, though they do not know of their being the former: so are not disturbed by the contradiction, nor driven to the dilemma of either dividing the substance, or confounding the persons. They seem to apprehend the Son on coming down to earth, disunited from the substance of his Father, who remained behind at a distance in heaven: yet during that separation retaining his divinity, and so being a distinct God. They apprehend him and the Spirit sometimes possessing the Attributes as of their own nature, sometimes subordinate to the Father, acting by his powers and under his direction; and this they conceive occasionally according to what the other doctrines of Religion in their apprehension require: but as they do not much compare their ideas together, so neither do they perceive any discordance among them, such being habituated to occur at times as are most serviceable for their present use. Therefore it is a very prudent and honest caution, to revere the mystery without prying curiously into it, and you do them a real injury by putting them upon comparisons of their ideas, unless their Christianity be a mischief to them, which it might be somewhat difficult to prove: for you must either deprive them of the benefit received from that, or endanger their disbelieving the unity of God, that grand fundamental article both of revealed and natural Religion.

As for the pretence of this article being the foundation of spiritual tyranny, this is not true; for history and experience testify, that those who have erected schemes of tyranny did not find it sufficient for their purpose, but were forced to build upon additions of their own, such as transubstantiation, purgatory, the custody of the keys: our modern seducers of the populace pretend to extraordinary illuminations, peculiar providences, and wonder-working powers: and Mahometism, that religion propagated by the sword, totally rejects the Trinity for this notable reason, because there cannot be a son without a mother as well as father. Perhaps nobody was ever hurt barely by his reception of the creeds, how erroneously soever he may have understood them: it is the stir made about them that does the mischief. Any speculative point, as the individuality of compounds, or super-addition of a new existence upon their conjunction, might raise as great disturbances as the disputes between Athanasius and Arius, if once warmly espoused as a matter of state, or taken up for a party distinction.

3. The scantiness of our understandings and obscurity of our ideas, occasioned principally by the unsteadiness of our language, (for we generally think in words) is such, that every man who will pry narrowly into his own thoughts, may find many contrarieties among them: which he cannot get rid of when discovered, because he cannot always know which to throw

aside, each being supported by evidence that its opposition to the other will not warrant him to reject. Nevertheless, one should choose to harbour as few inconsistencies as possible, and there is none so likely way to escape them, where the assurance on both sides is strong, as by examining the terms employed in expressing them, in order to find out such exposition as may render them compatible with one another. Therefore the question now before us depends upon the construction of the expressions employed, and becomes resolved into this other, namely, whether saying that three Persons are one God, is the same as saying that three Persons are one Person, or three Gods one God; that is, whether the words used in the first proposition be equivalent to those standing in the others.

Now I apprehend the unity of the Godhead is clearly enough understood on both sides not to admit of a dispute: so the only difficulty remains upon the word Person, which it is obvious must have such an idea affixed to it, as shall not include the idea of substance, for else we shall never escape the contradiction of making number three to be number one. Personality, I believe, is universally ascribed both by learned and simple to some one individual substance, whether compound or simple it is no matter here. I have endeavoured to show in former Chapters, that it denotes a particular substance, indivisible, not consisting of parts, nor communicable to any other; for I can never be you, how much soever I may be made like you, nor exist by your substance: so that every intelligent or perceptive substance, whether actually having perception or not, is a person, and every person a substance distinct from all others, and unchangeably that person.

Mr. Locke places personality in consciousness, which he conceives may be annexed to a system of matter, from whence we may conclude him to conceive that it may pass successively from one system to another; and so indeed it actually must in the several stages of life, the material system, as some believe, changing in us every seven years: but we can hardly suppose him ever to conceive it possible, that several consciousnesses should unite at the same time in any one system or substance. So that upon all these hypotheses the contradiction still stares us in the face, for that three Persons are one substance comes out to be the same as that number three is number one.

But divines will ask, who gave Mr. Locke or you authority to settle our language for us? the term as severally applied by you may be proper enough for your uses: but it is an unprecedented thing for the same words to carry very different senses in different sciences? Then let the shoemaker keep to his last, and leave the interpretation of scripture doctrines to us, who have made it the business of our lives to understand them. Now I must acknowledge the reprehension just, for words being arbitrary signs may be affixed to any sense for convenience sake, and often take a very different currency in succeeding generations from what they had formerly, as perhaps will appear by-and-by to be the case with the word at present in question.

But by the way I must remark, that the words Person, Trinity, and Unity of substance are not scripture terms, but chosen upon human authority as the properest to express the sense of Scripture. I do not object to them upon that account; for their long and general reception in the Church is a sufficient evidence that they do contain the genuine scripture doctrine; so we do not cavil at the style used, we only want to know in what sense the word Person ought to be understood.

I do not remember to have met with any further explanation than that

it is not to be taken in the common acceptation wherein we use it in distinguishing one man's person from another, by his having a body and soul, dispositions and features peculiar to himself. This is enough for the common believer, who being taught that the divine Persons differ in another manner than human persons, thereby escapes contradiction, though not obscurity: which is a much less formidable enemy, as being more familiar among the short-sighted race of men. But those who are used to lay their thoughts together will expect something more explicit than this negative explanation: if they be content to take things upon very good authority without being able to comprehend the manner of their being effected, yet they will claim a right to be informed intelligibly, what it is they are to believe; at least they will be better satisfied if a construction which may be clearly understood, can be given to the word Person, consistent with the orthodox doctrines.

4. The Greek word for Person was Hypostasis, which being used by Plato in speaking of the Deity, induced many of the ancient Christians to adopt his notions into their system, the more readily because their zeal made them desirous of showing that the Trinity was so rational a doctrine as to have been discovered by the human reason of Plato. Cudworth will not allow him the discoverer, but to have learned it from Pythagoras, and that it had probably been taught before by Orpheus: but when we reflect how apt Plato was to put things into the mouth even of his master Socrates which never were in his head, and how natural it is for each new philosopher to improve largely upon the hints afforded him by his predecessors, we cannot depend upon the hypostatic doctrine being older than Plato himself. It would take up too much of my time, and perhaps might produce more perplexity than illustration, to hunt about for long quotations upon this matter: so I shall content myself with setting down such conception of the Platonic opinions as remains with me from what little reading I have had in his dialogues, and Cudworth's intellectual system: first premising some observations upon the manner of human apprehension in general to render my account the clearer.

When we learn our accidence we are taught that a noun substantive is that which can stand by itself, whence we are easily led to imagine anything we can express by a substantive contains something substantial, having an existence independent of everything else. Those substances indeed, which have not a permanent application, must be excepted, but whatever we find convenient to distinguish constantly by one appellation, we account an existing substance; being too apt to take our own ideas, and the names we express them by, for real essences of things. Thus when a carpenter has prepared the shelves and other parts of a bookcase, if he ties them up in a bundle for convenience of carriage, the bundle is no being different from what they were while scattered about his shop, because he will unbind them again as soon as he comes to your house: but when he has fastened them together properly with glue and nails, the bookcase begins to exist, and is esteemed a new thing, having uses and properties not to be found in the disjointed materials.

A crowd is no distinct existence, because it will disperse again presently; but if the same people be erected into a corporation, there is a new existence superadded, and they become a Person in law capable to sue and be sued, to purchase chattels, grant leases, and perform many other acts of a single person: therefore we say the Bank did not exist before King William's reign, nor the South Sea Company before Queen Anne's, but they

still exist individually the same companies, although perhaps there are scarce any of the original members living. And there are folks who will battle with you tooth and nail, that when the King incorporates six hundred men into a regiment, there is a new being produced which was not existent before, while the men were rambling at large about the country: and that this being would remain the same, although by deaths, desertions, and recruitings, every man in it were changed.

Since then we of this enlightened age are so prone to take a noun substantive for a substance, and place existence in composition, incorporation, and regimentality; no wonder if heathen Plato, born almost in the infancy of philosophy, should mistake his own ideas for real beings having a separate existence, independent on the objects from whence he drew them. Then since all things discover and distinguish themselves to us by their forms and qualities, nor can we perceive or apprehend anything totally divested of them, and since forms and qualities may be expressed by nouns substantive, he conceived them to have a reality and existence of their own, independent on the subject wherein they were found: for the roundness in a piece of clay is a different thing from the clay itself, and though there were no bodies in the world perfectly round, as perhaps there are not, still there would be such a thing as roundness in the abstract, of which we currently form an idea.

But all particular objects became what they are by the qualities residing in them, which constitute their essence; and upon being transferred to other objects carry the essence along with them. Thus the piece of clay became round by the introduction of roundness into it, the merchants became a Bank and South Sea Company, and the six hundred fighting men a regiment, by having incorporeity and regimentality introduced among them: and if all the particles of the clay, proprietors of the companies, or men of the regiment were exchanged successively for others, the rotundity, incorporeity, and regimentality would be transferred to a new set of constituents, which would have the same essence that had belonged to the old ones. Yet Plato having a clearer head than our modern philosophers, could distinguish quality from substance, and discern that quality cannot exist alone, but must reside either in some object where we perceive it, or in the abstractions of our own mind: and this it might do without confounding its particular existence with that of the subject possessing it. For the ancients had a notion that one thing might inexist within another, still retaining its existence distinct from that: thus the roundness inexists in the clay, and the thought of it inexists in my understanding; yet roundness is not clay, nor understanding, neither are clay and understanding roundness. And they conceived further, that each quality wherever residing though in a thousand places at once, was still numerically the same: for if you and I look upon a thousand marbles, the rotundity in them all, and the rotundity remaining in our memory after we have turned our backs upon them, is one and the same individual existence.

Nevertheless, Plato gave the preference to quality above substance, as being more stable and steady, for substances fluctuate without ceasing, perpetually changing their essences, becoming this thing or that, according to the qualities infused among them: but qualities must always remain the same they ever were, in whatever subject residing. A beautiful young lady, if she lives long enough, perchance may grow ugly and old: but youth can never be anility, nor beauty become ugliness. A colt may grow to be a

horse, and afterwards made a gelding: but colteity, horseiety, and geldingeity, must always continue themselves, in whatever beast inexisting. A mob of sturdy gypsies, when men are scarce, may be pressed into a regiment: but gypsiety and regimentality can never be turned into one another by all the powers of nature or royal prerogative.

5. From hence he inferred, that qualities were unchangeable, eternal, and uncreated, incapable of losing their essence into whatever subjects they migrated, or of suffering diminution upon being dispersed into ever so many: for there must have been such a thing as roundness in the abstract from everlasting, it could not but be, and whether inexisting in clay or marble, in our memory or meditation, it can never change into squareness, or gibbosity, or whiteness, or softness, or any other quality, but must always continue invariably itself; and loses nothing of its reality and existence in one subject, by being communicated to millions beside.

But here a question will naturally occur, that since qualities have had an eternal duration, yet cannot exist alone without some subject wherein to inexist, where could they find such receptacle for their inexistence before there were any bodies to concrete with them, or intelligent creatures to receive them in the abstract? To this it was readily answered, that they existed in God, whose uncreated substance might well afford them an eternal duration: for God is unchangeable, without beginning, in all his Attributes, having had nothing to learn from everlasting; therefore every thing known or knowable must have been perfectly known to him from all eternity, and in his knowledge the things so known did from all eternity inexist. That these ideas in the divine mind were the archetypes from whence all forms in bodies, and ideas in the human mind were taken, in a manner analogous to an impression made upon wax with a seal, which may communicate its figures without parting with them, or diminishing anything of the originals engraven upon it.

It is not easy to account this way for the ideas of pain, uneasiness, ignorance, doubt, error, malice, selfishness and passion, too frequently inexistent in the minds of men, nor whether Plato supposed them two impressions taken from archetypes existing eternally in the divine mind: perhaps he would have said they were only negations of their opposite qualities: but let him look to that, it is not my business to defend his scheme, I am only a reporter.

To go on then with our philosopher; as we have but one understanding to contain all that multiplicity of ideas and abstract essences inexistent in it, so the divine understanding is one, and the same throughout that infinitude of knowledge whereto it extends. But understanding alone can produce nothing without something else to employ it: for we find by experience that we can bring no work to perfection merely by understanding it, but there must be other causes to co-operate with the ideal, or they will rest in empty speculation: and after all our refinements we can form none other conceptions of God, than what are built upon such little likeness as we can find of him in his image, the human soul.

Accordingly Plato, observing that we must have a motive or disposition of mind to set our understanding at work, and a volition or power to make it take effect, before we can execute what we know, ascribed three similar principles to the divine nature: the first he called To Agathon or Goodness, the second Nous or Intelligence, and the third Pysche or Activity: and conceiving our knowledge of objects to be a voluntary act of the mind,

not a passive perception, he supposed this must likewise have a motive to give it birth; therefore Nous was generated by To Agathon, and from these two proceeded that exertion by which all things were created and formed.

It remained to find a general name for these three principles; Quality would not do, because the ideas and abstract essences inexisted in the Nous, and though qualities may coexist together in the same subject, as squareness, yellowness, and softness in wax, yet they cannot inexist in one another, for yellowness cannot be soft, nor squareness yellow: nor could substance be the term, for then they must have been component parts of the To On or divine substance, which would have destroyed the unity of the Godhead, because substances cannot inexist in anything, much less coexist in the same subject. Therefore he styled them Hypostases or Subsistences, which is something between substance and quality, inexisting in the one, and serving as a receptacle for the other's inexistency within it. Thus here was a Trinity in Unity, consisting of three co-eternal, co-equal, co-infinite Hypostases inexisting in the To On, the one undivided substance. I do not recommend this explanation to anybody, as being not quite sure of understanding it myself; and Cudworth owns the Platonic was not exactly the same with the orthodox Christian Trinity, though much nearer to it than to Arianism: but I have never yet happened to meet with any other light attempted to be thrown upon the word Hypostasis.

As to the Œons, which Cudworth tells us were holden by some people, they will not help us at all; for Œon or Aion is only a Greek word for Eternal, which being an adjective has not the least pretence to be taken for an hypostasis or even an existence, and we shall be never the wiser for being told that there are several eternals in the divine substance: besides that Athanasius positively declares, that there are not three eternals, but one eternal.

6. Having had so little success with the Greek, let us try what can be done upon the Latin word Persona: for we may presume the Latin fathers understood the sense of their Greek cotemporaries, and chose a term whereinto Hypostasis might be properly translated without losing anything of the original used before in the Church. And we may with better reason expect to find this word intelligible, because not a scripture term, but pitched upon as expressive of a scripture doctrine: but when men change the terms wherein things have been delivered, and go to express another's sense in language of their own, it is to be presumed they will employ terms familiar to the hearer, which might make that clear to his apprehension, they had judged obscure before: especially if the word they use be found to have had a current signification, one can scarce imagine they would employ it in any other which must render it equivocal, when they were not pinned down to that by authority in exclusion of other terms less liable to misapprehension.

Now Persona signified originally a vizard used by the Roman actors upon the stage: it was made hollow and big enough to contain the whole head of the actor, and was shaped and coloured as near as could be guessed to imitate the features and complexion of the person he was to represent: so that if you were well acquainted with Oedipus, or Atreus, or Priam, from pictures or statues of them extant, you might immediately know which of them you were to imagine standing before you, as soon as Roscius entered, before a word was spoken. Therefore Persona is the same as Character, a very different thing from Person in the English sense of the word, for Garrick is still the same person whether in the character of Lear, or Richard:

and though we sometimes say, In the person, this is only a contradiction of the sentence which would run at length, in representing the person of Lear. For the very person of Lear cannot be introduced upon the stage, or if he could he might then speak for himself without wanting anybody to speak for him: nor do the audience ever imagine Garrick to lose his own personality, for then they would not applaud him for imitating so truly the gestures, the countenance, the tenor of voice suitable to the character he represents, all which would flow naturally from the real person without any skill or art to produce them.

I would gladly have forborne mingling theatrical ideas among our meditations on so sacred a subject, but it was not easy to avoid them in explaining a term derived originally from the stage. Yet there is no necessity the word should always carry precisely its first signification; we find the contrary in human transactions: a man may act in several characters yet without assuming those that are counterfeit; if he be invested with authority, he may still behave with familiarity and freedom among his friends in his private character, but always keep a distance and dignity when acting in his character of a magistrate, and may instruct his family or intimates with what decorum and forms of respect to appear before him in the exercises of his office. Our laws consider a justice of peace or a constable as different persons in the execution of their authority, and in their private dealings: the same treatment which would be no offence against the one, is an indict able misdemeanor against the other.

Therefore it would be blasphemy to imagine God counterfeiting the character of any other: if he acts in several, he acts always in characters peculiarly his own, incommunicable to any creature. I have before found it convenient to apprehend him under two characters, in a Chapter of the second Volume bearing that title: wherein he is distinguished into the Creator and Governor of the universe, one producing substances with their primary properties, and constituting the nature of things, the other directing his measures thereby so as to produce all the good possible thereout: the one enacting laws which are binding upon the other.

I had nothing then in my thoughts relative to the subject in hand, but was led into the notion by the difficulties occurring from the mixture of evil interspersed in the world, upon which I imagined we might satisfy ourselves the easier by considering him as two distinct persons, two in conception only, but in reality one. I shall not take this for a foundation to build upon, being only my own imagination, which anybody may follow or not as he finds most convenient for his own use: and perhaps contains nothing similar to the Trinity, or if it does, the Governor must include all the three Persons, yet not confounding them with one another, but without observing their distinction. Nevertheless, having hit upon a distinction of characters, I began to think it might serve as a clue to lead me further than I then had occasion to go: and having exercised my thoughts that way, has probably been helpful to me since I applied them particularly to the subject before us, by bringing them to fall readier into their present train, which I shall now endeavour to draw out to view.

7. In the Chapter of Providence I have shown it agreeable with our ideas of the Deity to imagine that he might once for all have given his work of universal nature so perfect a constitution as that it might have run on its appointed course for ever, without needing any further application of his power: on the other hand, that it was not inconsistent with those ideas to suppose him purposely to have framed his laws of nature in such a man-

ner as to require his own interpositions, which were not sudden expedients to correct unforeseen deficiencies in his design, but predetermined, and comprised in the original plan together with the operations of second causes.

Having thus found the divine interposition alike probable in theory both on the negative and affirmative sides, I proceeded to examine whether it might be determined by the contemplation of visible nature, and could find no evidence of an interposition later than the formation of the planetary system, and this earth we inhabit: since when, so far as the eye of human reason can discern, all things both in the natural and moral world have gone on by the stated rules governing the motions of bodies, and actions of free agents. Nevertheless, the field still remains open for such evidence as can be produced of further interposition, and it becomes us to give the divines a fair hearing of such evidence as they do produce. It is not my business to examine the weight of their evidence: I have taken no more upon me than to attempt a clearer understanding of what they say, than hitherto has been commonly had, so that we may comprehend what it is we are to receive, or reject.

They tell us that God created the matter, and gave the form of this visible nature we behold: thus much we knew before. But they tell us likewise, that he has interposed many times since by miracles, prophecies, and revelations, that he united himself to one particular man, so as to become the same person with him from his birth, that he frequently co-operates with our endeavours to discover truths and perform good works, we could not have done without such aid, that these operations were performed by three Personæ in one God, not jointly, but each having a distinct share of them: the union with manhood and all done in virtue of that union was the work of the Son, the assistance afforded occasionally to men in general was the province of the holy Spirit, and all the rest of the Father.

By these distinct manners of operation, God appears to act in three characters, easily separable from one another in our conception, but joining mutually in advancement of the general design, and executing the principal strokes in the plan of Providence respecting the moral world. The Father acted in the character of King or Governor, controlling the courses of nature and actions of second causes by immediate exertions of his power, and by his signs and wonders prepared the minds of men for reception of the benefits imparted from the other two. The Son acted in the character of a co-agent or partner, not controlling the mental or bodily powers of Jesus, but adding a force and vigour which could not have been furnished by natural causes: supplied what had been left deficient in the plan of Providence, and rendered mankind capable of reaping advantage from the effusions of the holy Spirit. This last acts in the character of a friend and monitor, not working with the power and majesty of a monarch, nor dwelling inseparably with the mind of man, but imperceptibly throwing in assistance from time to time, as wanted, and thereby filling up the last lines in the divine plan.

8. For the effects of the union between God and man, I shall have occasion to consider them more particularly in another Chapter, to be entitled on the Redemption: I need here only offer my idea of the union itself. Our common notions of unity seem very confused and variable: whatever collection hangs long together without being visibly disunited, or changed in its constituent parts, and all that time bears one name, we esteem one thing.

The whole composition of a man, blood, bones, skin, hair, nails, we style an individual, and apprehend to be one substance, one existence: if he lose a leg or an arm, if he grow fat till his girdle will not come half round him, if he cut his hair, and pare his nails, and they grow again, if every particle in his body be changed by perspiration and nourishment, still it is the same individual substance. But whoever will reflect steadily on the nature of substances, must see that they can never change into one another, however one may be substituted in the place of another, without perceiving it: nor can any two, how closely soever placed, or in what manner soever joined together, become one, but must remain numerically distinct, though we may not be able to distinguish them by our senses, nor separate them by any experiment.

And the case is the same with substances of different natures, for a spirit can no more become a body, or a body a spirit, nor both together make one individual substance, than two bodies can: therefore to say, that God was changed into man, or man into God, or that both united made one person in the modern philosophical sense of the word, is as flat a contradiction as that number two is number one. So that we must not understand the hypostatic union of a consubstantiality, or numerical identity between God and man; nor does the Church affirm any such thing, but teaches us to look into ourselves for an explanation of her meaning; as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.

Now let us consider in what manner our soul and body is one, and we shall find it to be not by conversion of spirit into body, but by taking body into a participation of functions with spirit: not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For personality belongs in property to spirit alone: body has none of its own, but assumes a borrowed personality from the particular spirit whereto it is vitally united. If the spirit of Euphorbus migrated into a cow, then into an eagle, and afterwards Pythagoras, still it was the same person in all migrations: and if the cow suffered for the faults of Euphorbus, here was no injustice done, because the party offending bore the punishment. So if the substance of your arm should by successive change of particles have become the substance of mine, which is not impossible to have been the case, considering the daily fluctuation both of our humours and solids, during its respective union with either of us, it partakes of our personalities, and all the good and evil deeds performed by it were your and my deeds.

Let us now apply this to the hypostatic union, wherein though we must understand personality in another sense, as importing character instead of numerical identity, yet the manner of union will remain the same: for the character of moral wisdom, innocence, and force to resist all pain, terror, and other temptations, belonged solely to the Deity: no human soul could act up to it; until the manhood being taken into God, that is, God being pleased perpetually to supply what was wanting in human nature, Jesus was united to the Son, which together became one Christ; whose whole conduct was of a piece throughout, running in one constant tenor and character, and his actions were those of the united agency. For all the acts of Jesus were acts of the Son, and the Son performed nothing but by the instrumentality of Jesus: as the spirit of a man performs nothing but by the instrumentality of his bodily powers.

9. As to the terms employed to express the origin of the two Personæ from the First, we must not expect to learn anything from them concerning the manner of their rising: for begotten cannot be understood in the same

sense wherein we use it upon all other occasions, and Proceeding is too general a term to afford us any light. We all proceed from the loins of Adam, the waters of a river proceed from its sources, diseases proceed from intemperance, wars and disturbances from the selfishness and vanity of mankind, the traveller to France proceeds from Canterbury to Dover, the schoolboy proceeds from Latin to Greek. Besides, Proceeding is not a scripture term, and if Begotten had been applied to the Spirit who drew his origin from the other two Personæ jointly, it might have raised as gross ideas, as Bishop Lavington has charged upon the Gnostics. Therefore the Church found it necessary to take a different term, and probably chose one of vague and indeterminate signification, to express a matter whereof they could give no clear and accurate description.

The word Begotten we find often employed in Scripture, but even there it is used figuratively, not as expressive of the Son's existence, but belonging originally to the man Jesus, whom Saint Luke proves to be the Son of God by deriving his genealogy from Adam, which was the Son of God. In this sense we are all so too; for though we cannot trace our genealogy, there is no doubt of our being lineally descended from Adam, which was the Son of God. But Jesus was called by way of eminence the Son of God and the Son of Man, as being the promised seed appointed by particular designation of Providence to restore the whole race of men from their fallen state of perdition. The Scripture abounds in figurative expressions taken from the Asiatic pinguid style, many of them very different from those current among us, and therefore appearing forced, harsh, enigmatical: nor perhaps has there been a more plentiful source of error and perplexity in Religion than the interpretation of figures either by taking them literally, or expecting too close a resemblance, or that the similitude must always be the same in different cases whereto they are applied.

The same figure of begetting is applied variously to both natures of Christ: sometimes he is derived from God through the medium of Adam, sometimes said to be conceived by the Virgin Mary of the Holy Ghost, sometimes called the only begotten, and sometimes the first born of every creature; which cannot be understood here of being our elder brother by adoption, unless you will suppose every creature without exception to rank among the adopted. For the purpose of the Scriptures was not to instruct men in metaphysical subtilties, but by proper application of the figures familiar among the Jewish populace, to fix their expectation of a deliverer and teacher upon the person of Christ, and thereby prepare them for a reverential and willing reception of his doctrines.

Nevertheless, since the gap designedly left in the plan of Providence, making room for the lapse of man and entrance of sin into the world, gave birth to the office of a Christ, which else could have no functions to execute, therefore it may be said even in modern propriety of language, that the second Persona was generated by the first. And since the same circumstance of the original design, together with the benefits worked out for the race of men in general, gave occasion to the assistance requisite for bringing particular persons within the reach of those benefits; therefore it may be said with the like propriety, that the third Persona proceeded from the other two.

10. According to the distinctions of Persona and offices above laid down, we must ascribe all miraculous works to the Father, to whose operation must be referred that illapse of a bodily shape in the manner of a dove at

Jordan, and the cloven tongues appearing at the feast of Pentecost; which were sent for signs and testimonies to the by-standers rather than for immediate use of the persons on whom they descended: for we can scarce imagine the second Persona wanted any assistance to perform his office; nor is the office of the third any other than to confer grace, not to teach men languages. And though Saint Paul mentions various gifts of the Spirit, among which he reckons miracle and prophecy, yet if we will keep our thoughts distinct and clear, we can attribute only the proper management of them to the Spirit, but the gifts themselves to the Father: and the calling them gifts of the Spirit might be solely in compliance with the Jewish language, who used from ancient times to speak of prophesying and performing mighty works by the Spirit of the Lord, long before the doctrine of the Trinity was revealed.

So likewise we may suppose Christ worked miracles as Moses and the Prophets did, by the power of the Father accompanying him, not imparted to him: for one can hardly imagine a power given to a man to operate as a second cause in stopping the diurnal rotation of the Earth, when Joshua said, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon; nor that the bodily powers of Jesus should be made instrumental in rectifying the optics of a man born blind. Nither did Christ himself claim the powers he appeared to exert as his own, but ascribed the glory of them to the Father: he said, My Father worketh and I work: his own share was no more than to discern the proper times when miracles would be worked, and to call for them as occasion required. The office of the Persona reached only to the faculty of Volition, for we may see by the struggles in what is called the last agony, the little fluctuations of counsel just before being betrayed, and the last pathetic exclamation upon the cross, that natural causes were left to take their ordinary effect upon the imagination of Jesus: so that we may conclude he had the same assaults of passion as we have, but never was overcome by them, and was in human infirmity and in all other things like unto us, sin only excepted.

. But the Scripture blends and mingles ideas of the different Personæ together; Christ is said to be conceived of the Holy Ghost, to be led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to grow in grace and favour both with God and Man, to cast out devils by the Spirit of the Father; and the calumniating that power in him seems to be called blaspheming against the Holy Ghost. The new birth is properly the work of the Spirit, and all supernatural application upon the hearts of particular persons belongs peculiarly to his office: yet it is said of those who love Christ that the Father and he will come unto them and make their abode with them; and our Church tells us, that upon receiving the sacrament devoutly, we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, we are one with Christ and Christ with us. So that it is neither necessary upon all occasions, nor practised by the best authorities, to distinguish exactly between the acts of the several Personæ.

11. The name Christ is the same as Anointed, which term is likewise applied to the reception of the Holy Ghost, sometimes called a Chrism or Unction. This name doubtless was chosen as being familiar to the Jews in order to lead them by their expectation of a temporal king styled by them the Lord's anointed, to attend to the promulgation of a new law.

For the like reason we may presume the other appellation of Word or Logos employed, because the Jews, by a Metonyme common among them, called a thing promised the Promise or Word given: so this appellation implied no more, than that Jesus was the person of whom all former pro-

phecies had given assurance that he should come for deliverance of mankind from the evils oppressing them. But being frequently applied to Christ as a title or proper name, has induced many to believe it contained something mysterious, expressive of certain qualities or powers peculiar to him: and because Logos signifies either a word spoken or the faculty of reason, they conceived of the Word as something analogous to the Nous or second Hypostasis of Plato, and made the Persona to whom it belonged the Demiourges or maker of the word; confirmed herein by an expression of Saint John's, By him all things were made, and without him was not anything made that was made.

I am not theologian enough to undertake the exposition of that text; perhaps it may mean that the whole plan of Providence was formed with a reference to the part he should act in it, and without such reference not a single stroke was drawn of all those intricate multitudes that were drawn. But I believe now the literal sense is not holden orthodox, at least I have not happened to meet with any person of repute in the Church understanding it so since Beveridge, who might be as good a man as ever lived, but certainly not the most judicious. To the best of my apprehension, God appears to have acted in his character of the Father when he made all things: we are taught in the Apostle's creed to believe God the Father almighty maker of heaven and earth; and in the Nicene, to believe him maker of all things visible and invisible: that he made them in wisdom I do not doubt, but that wisdom should be an agent or efficient cause of all the material particles falling into their proper station, I cannot comprehend.

In the other sense of Logos, as taken for a word or command, it seems as little capable of being an efficient cause as Wisdom: nor yet do I see any necessity to understand by God's saying, Let there be light, that he pronounced an audible voice, or issued any command at all. What I should imagine intended by that sublime manner of narration was to express that the acts of God are not operose, nor performed by degrees, as are all performances of man; who must put his materials in order one by one, and do half his work before he can finish the whole: but that upon the first exertion of omnipotence, light instantly sprang forth, not like the dawn of day by gradual increase, but in full perfection at once.

I have promised to build nothing upon Hypothesis, or else I could find a way to make the word avail as a cause, by help of the Mundane Soul: who pervading intimately all the particles of a Chaos, and being active throughout in every part, might bring them into that arrangement we call the order of nature, compound them into elements, and give them the motions requisite for bringing forth all those productions we see generated, yet could not proceed to action without a command given, and a plan assigned from above of the measures expedient to be taken. Upon this supposition God may be said to have made all things by his word as an operating cause, that is, by communication of his plan and declaration of his Will to the Mundane Soul: as a man builds a house by his instructions and orders given to the mason and the carpenter. Yet even here the Word would not be an efficient, but an authoritative and directive cause: and God must be esteemed to act in his character of Father the Supreme Omniscient Monarch of the universe, not as the Son in the character of an associate united to some created mind, keeping the Will invariably in a constant course of rectitude.

12. The divine Attributes ascribed by Athanasius to the Persona must be understood of the Godhead: for they were all the same almighty, eternal

uncreated Being, acting in several capacities: and it is remarkable he has said nothing of omnipresence and omniscience, which can hardly belong to them all in their distinct personal character. The Son is described capable of locomotion; he came down from heaven, descended into hell, rose again and re-ascended into heaven: while upon earth he was confined to the body of Jesus, moving to and fro with that, present and absent where that was either. During the day and two nights of his continuance in hell, God acted not in the filial character any where upon earth: and in his character of the Spirit, he acts or is present nowhere unless in the minds of men.

As to the Omniscience, this makes no part of the filial character: Christ himself disclaims it, attributing to the Father what extraordinary knowledge he had more than a human understanding might have attained, whose improvement had been in no single instance neglected; for the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do, who showeth him all things that himself doeth. And lest we should understand this of all things without exception, he declares expressly that he did not know the day and hour of the last judgment.

Then if we apply Eternity to the distinction of persons, and say that God has from everlasting acted in the three several characters; besides that we shall make three Eternals, for though but one eternal God or Being, yet there would be three eternals, that is, eternal persons, this would infer an eternity of the Creation too: because we can scarce imagine God to assume characters before there were objects for him to act upon in them: so the generation and procession could not take place until there were, at least in designation, a race of lapsed and imperfect creatures needing an atonement and continual assistance to rescue them from perpetual misery. From whence it will further follow, that the Universe, upon the whole, has continued for ever in the same state, the several parts changing in a perpetual rotation; so that there has always been somewhere or other a fallen world to be the theatre whereon God might operate in his three distinct characters: and all the texts expressing a distinction of the Son from the Father before the world was, will be so many scripture proofs for the existence of worlds prior to that usually understood by the name.

And for the possibility of the created universe with all the substances contained in it being eternal, those who hold the eternity of the Personæ have least cause of any to boggle at it, for whatever he meant by begetting and proceeding, it must be acknowledged the Father was the substantial and efficient cause of the Son, and the Spirit: if then they were coeternal with him, it follows, that an effect may be as old as the cause, posterior in order of nature only, not in time. But though Creation be different from generation and procession, yet it as little requires length of time to effect it: for God said, let there be light, and there was light: in like manner it may be that he said long before, Let there be innumerable hosts of material and perceptive individual substances, each in such and such particular station, some constituting compounds by their mutual juxtaposition, having such and such impulses of motion among them, and it was so: nor can any man pretend to limit the time when it was he said this. Therefore there is no contradiction nor absurdity in the thought of the creature being coeternal with the Creator; posterior in order indeed it must have been, but not necessarily in time: for God might have created as soon as he was God omnipotent, that is, from all eternity without beginning.

Nevertheless, since the conceptions of men are various, and I should be glad to make every one's thoughts consistent with themselves, if not recon-

cilable with those of other people, I shall try what can be done for the benefit of such as hold it impossible, heterodox, and absurd, that there should have been any created being existent six thousand years ago. Yet I suppose they will allow God to have existed from all eternity, and that he might from all eternity have designed and laid out the plan he was to execute in time; so the persons might have been eternally distinct in the bosom and counsels of God, who contemplated the gracious and glorious purposes he should accomplish in those three characters. And this may serve for an explanation of the text, Now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

13. And now I have done my best towards explaining this most mysterious article of the doctrines taught in our church, I hope I shall not be suspected of a secret intention to undermine the foundations of Religion, nor yet to mislead or impose anything upon the consciences of men: but it will be seen that my purpose was nothing more than an honest attempt to put a rational and intelligible construction upon the words delivered, without pronouncing upon the truth and falsehood of the matters contained therein when clearly understood. For I would be considered as a commentator, not as a judge: I pretend to no authority nor extraordinary skill in divinity, therefore lie under no temptation to conclude with, This is the catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. But such conclusion having been annexed to expositions in former times, leads me to examine what it is that makes a fundamental, necessary to secure us from eternal perdition.

Happiness is the ultimate end of action, and every man's own happiness the ultimate end to him; but happiness consists in the aggregate of pleasures, nor in any single pleasure taken by itself. Now it often happens that an action, which gives us present pleasure, may occasion great uneasiness in the consequences; as on the other hand an action painful in present, may produce great pleasures afterwards: therefore the first fundamental is Prudence, or a regard to the whole income redounding from any measure of conduct; with a preference of the sum of happiness, remaining upon balance, before any present enjoyment or avoidance of trouble. But as our prospect does not stand limited to the scenes of this life, nor the consequences of our conduct terminate here; so neither ought our computation of happiness nor measures of prudence to be confined to temporal advantage.

Yet we can make no discoveries in visible nature to direct us in what manner to prepare for our future welfare: the only rational ground we have to go upon, must be in contemplation of the Supreme Being, who is one, almighty, all-wise, omniscient, beneficent, and equitable, God, Maker and Governor of the universe, having formed the whole into one kingdom with a mutual connection of interest between all the members. Hence we are to regard ourselves as citizens of the world in the largest sense of the word, having no separate interest from that of the whole; so that it is the interest of every one of us to advance the good of the Creation by contributing our little share thereto, in such part of it wherewith we have immediate intercourse, doing all the service we can to our fellow-creatures, but still preferring the sum of happiness, whether in the extent of our services to many, or solid fruits of them to particular persons, before present pleasure or gratification: and this is the surest way we can proceed to make preparation for our own future advantage.

Thus it is our knowledge of the Deity that lays the foundation of our so-

cial duties, bringing them home to our own interest: it points out the only measures conducive to our happiness hereafter, and it likewise secures us present peace and solace of mind. Therefore it behoves us to acquire a strong idea of the universal government of God, that nothing happens without his knowledge and permission; a sound and lively sense of his Providence ordering all things for the best to the whole, and a firm persuasion of his equity insuring to us our share of the good dispensed: which will render us satisfied under his administration, pleased with our existence: industrious in promoting the benefit of others, and attentive to our own advantages, with a manly disdain of all momentary gratifications that would beguile us away from them.

These conceptions then of the divine nature and attributes are the fundamental and essence of Religion, which whoever possesses completely, needs nothing else to procure his happiness. There are those who pretend they can attain all this by their own strength exerted in the due exercise of their natural reason: the Church asserts the contrary, and that they can neither know how to go about their work without the instructions given in the Gospel, nor proceed in it effectually without the divine assistance, which they must recur to the same oracle for directions how to obtain. It is not my business to enter into the controversy between them: I am now to follow the clue given by the Church, making my observations as I pass along the ground whither she leads.

Now in order to receive benefit from the Gospel, a man must be persuaded of its authenticity, and of those doctrines expressed therein so plainly as that he who runs may read: such as that mankind is fallen from that perfect state wherein they were originally created; that God has manifested his power at several times among them by miracles, prophecies, and revelations; that Jesus Christ was a divine Person, the Son of God, who by his death and resurrection reinstated them in that capacity of happiness they had lost by the fall; nevertheless, this is a capacity only, not an actual attainment, of no avail to particular persons without their endeavours to live a life of righteousness, strengthened by the assistance of the Holy Spirit to make them effectual: that the Scriptures are the word of God, containing the rules of righteousness, together with certain ceremonies and institutions necessary to lead into the practice of them, and to obtain the divine assistance. These I take to be the fundamentals: but what there is of them peculiar to Christianity (for many of the doctrines plainly expressed, and the necessity of our own endeavours, are not peculiar) are remotely so, because connected with those above described as essentially fundamental.

For Christ assures us that no man can come to the Father but through the Son; so then coming to the Father, that is, attaining such a just and full sense of the divines Attributes as Adam might, is the fundamental point, and were it now possible to have access any other way, this would not be needful; but because it is not possible, therefore coming to the Son becomes fundamental derivatively for the sake of that originally so, whereto it opens the sole passage: yet it is unalterably fundamental, the derivation being made through human nature, which we can never divest ourselves of.

14. We have not yet found all the articles of the Athanasian creed to be fundamentals, nor essential characteristics to distinguish a disciple of Christ: he cannot well be such indeed without believing Christ a divine person, and the Son of God in some sense or other peculiar to himself, and that the operations of the Holy Ghost are the acts of God himself; but I apprehend he may be a very good Christian without holding the Trinity in Unity as

there described, and all the particulars of the hypostatic union, for they are not to be found in Scripture. I do not deny the sense of them is contained there, but a man must have gone through the University and read a library of books to find it out; and when he has done, it is ten to one but another man, who has had a university education, and read a library too, will pronounce him heretical.

We have observed in § 10, that the Scripture frequently blends the acts and offices of the three Personæ together in such manner as to make it scarce possible to distinguish them; nor is it always easy to know when what is spoken of Christ should be applied to his human nature, or his divine, or to both jointly. He is called the Son of David, and proved to be so by a genealogical table, which can relate only to the man Jesus, for the Son of God, nor the united Christ, was not begotten from the loins of David: he is called so too as being the king and deliverer of whom David was a type, and the Logos or Promise which was to descend into union with one of David's seed; and this double sense made the difficulty that puzzled the Jews upon the question, If David called him Lord, how then was he his son?

Hence I think we may reasonably infer, that these metaphysical niceties are not to be ranked among the things which he that runs may read, nor were intended to be given in the Scriptures as fundamentals of the Christian faith. Not but that a man may laudably take pains to understand everything recorded there, yet he need not lie under terrors for the event, nor give himself over as a child of perdition, if he should not comprehend, or should happen to think wrong upon the mysterious points: provided the mistake is such as shall not involve him in error with respect to the doctrines plainly expressed; and this proviso is necessary to be considered for understanding what I am going to offer next.

For popular opinions are always bound up in sets, a number of articles compose together one entire system. The common Christian cannot examine them singly, he must take every one or reject all; and if you can set him against any one, he generally does reject all, and passes over into an opposite sect. But it is not unusual for crafty or wrong-headed persons to draw the unwary imperceptibly into an opposite sect by their own interpretations of a received article. When this happens it becomes necessary to obviate the mischief by drawing out the article into more particulars than were needful before, which then grows into a fundamental, because connected with what was truly so, protecting it as a necessary defence and outwork. But an outwork, though of no use for inhabitancy or cultivation or any accommodation of life, yet it is of necessary use for the defence of the place: and the more remote these adventitious fundamentals are from the essential, the more sacred they ought to be esteemed; because having no intrinsic value, there is nothing beside the opinion of their sacredness to engage men, who cannot discern the dependence of their safety in essentials upon them, to maintain their ground against attacks.

15. Now we may presume the divines of sound judgment and piety, about Athanasius' time, found the system of Arius essentially erroneous, but supported by some plausible interpretations of the texts relating to the Personæ: it became necessary then to compile the creed commonly called Athanasian, to be couched in expressions opposite to those used by Arius, as an outwork to protect the Christian flock from being beguiled by his insinuations. To instance in one particular point: I know very little of Arius but have heard enough of the Omoousion and Omoiousion to per-

suade me he taught the Son was not of the same but of similar substance with the Father, that is, God made or created another God, numerically distinct from himself, but of the same divine nature, and alike infinite in power, wisdom, goodness, and all the other attributes.

Now I must own this notion seems to me productive of conceptions essentially erroneous, as being derogatory to the Deity by supposing the work of his hand could be equal to himself, and therefore cannot blame the Church for guarding against it by opposite terms sufficient to answer the purpose. For though the common Christian might not exactly know the difference between numerical and specific identity, or similitude of substance, he must know that Same was a different word from Similar; and if he could not tell precisely what was meant by Begotten, still he might know well enough that it was not Made, nor Created; so would stand upon his guard when he heard anybody using the prohibited words, not to heed anything else they said. This creed, then, as the Church was circumstanced at that time, became a fundamental: but being only circumstantially so, had the greater need of a sacred awe to enforce a regard to it. Therefore Athanasius, or whoever thought proper to assume his name, inserted the damnatory clauses, because they knew the plain man had but one option, either to be orthodox or Arian throughout, and fall into all the errors of that sect; which yet he might innocently slide into by degrees, unless armed against the first approaches with a sacred dread and horror of a speculative mistake they knew must draw fatal consequences behind.

Thus the fundamental article seems to be negative rather than affirmative, to believe there are not three Gods nor the Son a creature; not actually to believe the Trinity in Unity, with all the other hard words employed in the creed: and we may presume they exacted only a verbal, not an intellectual assent. For they must know it was impossible for the vulgar to comprehend them, and that no man can assent to a proposition he does not comprehend, any further than that it contains a truth, though he does not know what it is.

Having made this concession, for fear the free-thinker should turn it to a use I never intended, I must remark that there is a very material difference between comprehending the thing affirmed, and comprehending what is said of it: the former is not necessary to gain assent, the want of the latter is no possible ground either of assent or dissent, other than that vague one of an unknown truth. I can believe that something has existed in all eternity without a cause, yet I can neither comprehend eternity, nor how anything can exist without a cause, because all the things I have experience of had causes of their existence. If a man pretends he carries home Paul's church in his pocket, I comprehend clearly what he says, and see plainly it is impossible; therefore must think him a liar while I take him seriously, and not as a joker meaning a print of the church. If he says he moved two balls lying in close contact upon a billiard-table by touching only one of them, I can easily believe him, though I cannot comprehend how the hindmost ball can begin to move before the foremost has gone off to leave room for it, nor yet how it can give motion to the other before it has any itself; so that the motions of both seem necessarily prior in order and time to one another. But if he tells me, that motion is the act of being in power so far forth as in power, I do not comprehend what he says, so cannot possibly give either assent or dissent: it may be as true as the Gospel for aught I

know, and if I have a good opinion of his judgment and sincerity, I shall believe he has a meaning in the expression, and that it contains a certain truth, though what the truth is I cannot possibly guess.

I doubt not there are multitudes of pious Christians, and many very sensible persons, to whom the Athanasian creed appears much the same language as the act of being in power so far forth as in power, in which case it will be impossible for them to give it an intellectual assent: yet for all that, if they have any opinion of the Church, they may easily believe it contains the true Christian doctrine, and this is enough to keep them from the Arian heresy; for little as they can comprehend the terms employed, they cannot fail of discerning their contrariety to those of similar substance and a created God, or a creature invested with the divine Attributes, and made equal with God.

16. There seems little danger now to the public from the Arian heresy: it may have crept into the closets of a few speculatists, but you can do nothing with them by creeds: force them to repeat what words you please, they will put their own sense upon them; for the Rosycrusian art of transmutation will work wonders, as often converting gold into base metals as these into gold. Therefore in my humble opinion this creed might be spared, as being an outwork to a quarter not now liable to attacks, and giving scandal to this enlightened age wherein everybody expects to understand everything: and I have heard some divines express a wish it were dropped out of our Liturgy.

Nevertheless, while it remains an outwork, we ought not to let the enemy make a lodgement upon it; to prevent which was the design of this Chapter, rather than any direct benefit I could expect to do the believer: for the less he concerns himself with particulars upon this matter, the better. I have said it is one of those points remotely fundamental which were made so by circumstances of times, and as things stand at present circumstanced, seems to retain no more of that quality than enough to render a direct opposition the mark of an enemy, but not an actual reception necessary to characterize a friend.

For my part, I am for enlarging the pale of orthodoxy as wide as possible without breaking the enclosure, and for that purpose would contract the number of fundamentals, for it is by multiplying them that the walls of partition have been run across, dividing the ground into so many little scanty closes. Therefore if a man inadvertently or in private confidence gives me suspicion that he is not perfectly Athanasian, I can give him the right hand of fellowship, if I have none other reason to withhold it. Nay, further, though I fear it will be thought carrying my Christian charity beyond bounds, if he only esteems the introduction and propagation of Christianity as an event eminently providential, doubting of the supernatural facts recorded, and consults the Scriptures jointly with his own reason in forming his idea of the Supreme Being, the administration of the moral world, his religious sentiments and rules of conduct, still I am inclined to admit him into the brotherhood, provided he leaves other people in quiet to believe as much more as they please, without undervaluing or attempting to puzzle them upon that account. But if he shows a fondness to impugn or ridicule things generally holden sacred, I must regard him as an adversary: and since persons of no Religion delight much in such practices, I may suspect him to be a bad man, but at best shall think him indiscreet, unskilled in human nature, and defective in that regard to order and the public good which is one of the principal moral duties.

17. The want of distinguishing between essential and remote fundamentals, seems to be the fatal rock upon which both the bigot and free-thinker make shipwreck, though they are cast off to opposite sides. The former finds certain institutions, ceremonies, and articles of faith strongly inculcated as necessary to make a true disciple, so he places righteousness wholly in them: orthodoxy with him is all in all, he hunts sermons, sings psalms, and prays literally without ceasing, and becomes righteous overmuch. He sees no difference between the skin and substance of Religion, nor that because the fruit cannot ripen without the skin, therefore, such strict charge is given to preserve it unbroken; so he crams himself with skin to a surfeit, till he has no room for the fruit. He forgets that Christ will disown those who say unto him, Lord, Lord, but do not the Will of the Father: so doing this Will is the sole essential point, and the Lord, Lord, being necessary only for the sake of that, ought to be repeated no oftener than such necessity requires.

On the other hand, the free-thinker, ever hasty and superficial, looks no deeper than the skin, which he very shrewdly discovers can contain no nourishment for the mind: so he perpetually teazes you with childish questions. What Religion is there in forms and ceremonies? what sacredness in one day, or place, more than another? can God eternally reward, or damn a man according as he says Ay or No to a speculative proposition? For it never enters into his shallow pate to reflect that things of no moment in themselves may become highly valuable by their connections, and draw consequences of the utmost importance. What is money good for? you cannot eat it, you cannot drink it, you cannot clothe your back with it, nor warm yourself by it in winter: it is of none other use than to play at chuck, or spin upon a table to please a child, and our forefathers in the infancy of mankind could do very well without it: nevertheless, as the world goes, a competency of it is of necessary use to procure us all other things necessary, and we are forced to teach our children to be careful of the main chance, without which they will inevitably run themselves into distress and misery.

I suppose he would laugh me to scorn if I should say, that faith may have an effect upon the constitution, or that my pulse and digestion would be ever the worse, whatever my opinions were: yet for all that, to use his own favourite verb, I will venture to say that if I should happen to believe arsenic was sugar, it might cost me my life; or if I should lose my faith in exercise, I might pore over metaphysics, till I had brought on a jaundice, and so shorten my days by that heresy; or as this distemper is known to render the sight confused and darken the understanding, I might become a free-thinker.

In like manner, how little soever the Athanasian subtilties may add to the stock of useful knowledge, yet if you teach the plain man to regard them as impositions, he will think himself imposed upon in other things too, and practise sobriety and honesty no further than to escape the lash of the law, and censures of the world. For he cannot trace these duties to their natural foundations, nor see their reference to his own interests: he thinks them duties because enjoined in the Gospel, and he reverences the Gospel upon the authority of the Church, standing in no situation to examine other evidences. Therefore, it is too early to deprive him of this channel, till you can find some other way of inspiring him with just sentiments of the relation he stands in to his Creator, and his fellow-creatures.

To conclude, though one may easily escape violent extremes, it is very

difficult to hit the middle line between a strictness and looseness of principle; and the more so, because it varies according to times, and circumstances, and persons you have to deal with. Being apprised of this difficulty, we ought to use our best discretion upon all occasions, bearing in mind that there are fundamentals not essential, but made so by their connection with others, partly by human nature, and partly by institution: and to preserve our Christian charity with a great backwardness in thinking hardly or contemptuously of our neighbours for their believing either too little, or too much: for in our spiritual as well as our natural food, the same quantity may be too little for one man, which is too much for another.

CHAP. XIV.

REDEMPTION.

The doctrine of the Redemption, as commonly understood, depends upon that of the Trinity: for the sin of Man, being a wilful disobedience and direct rebellion against God, made such a breach upon his authority as no punishment less than eternal could repair; nor could this be remitted without violation of the divine Justice, unless upon some meritorious act sufficient to make amends for the flagrancy of the offence committed. Which act must be performed by Man, because Man, having done the injury, must make the reparation: but he being under the dominion of sin, had not strength to do anything good, nor if he had, could it have been meritorious, all his services being of justice due to his Creator and supreme Governor; therefore, it was necessary he should be invested with a divine power by an union with God himself, in order to open a passage for mercy. Yet the party offended could not make atonement to himself; so that Man must have remained obnoxious to eternal punishment, if there had not been distinct Persons in the Godhead: one of whom in transcendant love to mankind, being pleased to take our nature upon him, might make adequate satisfaction to the other, for the injury done to divine justice.

There are many objections made against this doctrine, all taken from the grossest sense in which it can be understood: for it is well known, that upon abstruse subjects, the same expressions will convey various ideas to different persons, according as they have been formed by nature, or trained by practice for such exercises. But the Free-thinker constantly takes his notions upon an article of Religion, from the apprehensions of the vulgar, being unable to reach, or unwilling to seek for any more rational construction; and employs what little penetration he has, to find absurdities in them which never occur to the vulgar.

Now if we could dive into the thoughts of our common people, who yet may be very good Christians and as good men as ourselves, (for goodness does not consist in strength of parts or depth of understanding,) we should probably find them apprehending that God created Man to fill up the vacant spaces left in heaven by the fallen Angels: but before he would admit him into the sacred mansions, he determined to try whether he would approve himself worthy of them. So he placed him in a garden, where was plenty of all the conveniences and enjoyments of life, which were given him to make free use of, except one tree, which he was formerly forbidden to touch under pain of death. Nevertheless, Man, by the suggestions of the serpent,

did eat of that tree, and thereby deservedly provoked the anger of God: who for this height of ingratitude and disobedience condemned him to dwell in everlasting flames with that rebellious spirit whose wicked insinuations he had voluntarily chosen to hearken to, rather than pay an easy obedience to the one single command of his Maker and Benefactor. But the Son of God, in compassion to mankind, interceded with his Father in their behalf; and that the authority of God might not suffer by letting sin pass with impunity, he condescended to take the human nature upon him, and therein pay the penalty due to divine Justice for the transgressions of man.

Having thus purchased pardon by the price of his blood, God will grant it for his sake, and upon his intercession; which he never fails to make for such as are members of his body, and it is not fit he should make it for those who refuse to be incorporated thereinto. But the conditions to become a member of Christ are these, to trust in his name, to resist the world, the flesh, and the devil, to perform all kind of good offices to their fellow members, which he will esteem as services actually done to himself, and to do good to those who are not of the household of faith, in imitation of their heavenly Father, who maketh his sun to shine upon the good and upon the evil, and sendeth his rain upon the just and the unjust. For orthodoxy alone will not serve the turn: when such as depend wholly upon that apply to him for his intercession in the dreadful distresses of the last day, saying, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? he will say unto them, Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know ye not.

2. Now the vulgar see nothing of the difficulties in this scheme which the Free-thinker has just wit enough to find out, but not enough to avoid by putting a rational construction upon the doctrines delivered. They know that experiment is the proper proof of a man's character, who cannot know himself, nor can anybody else tell, whether he be a good or wicked man until put to the trial: nor find any impropriety in imagining God to make trial before he would admit him to an attendance upon his throne in heaven together with the holy Angels. This blot is not hit by the Free-thinker, who admits the absolute contingency and self-origin of human action, because by this principle he can claim his shining virtues as entirely his own, not the gift of God in any sense, nor dependent upon motives deriving through a chain of causes from the provisions of Heaven, so he finds no fault with the supposition of God being uncertain how his creatures would behave until he had experience of it: he only cavils at the triflingness of the test, being none other than a prohibition against eating a particular sort of apple.

They see nothing unbecoming the divine nature in ascribing anger thereto: for the best of men are angry at wilful disobedience and crying ingratitude, and there are some offences which cannot be pardoned, even by a merciful prince, without unhinging the authority of his government. Nor is it unprecedented in the best policied states, that acts of attainder should pass against a whole rebellious race for the delinquency of their ancestor; nor that obstinacy and wickedness should run in the blood from one generation to another.

They see the greatest noblemen have children like themselves, whom they did not make nor create, but who descended from them, and for whom they have a particular fondness by paternal instinct: therefore why might not God have a Son of the same uncreated nature with himself, and be

prevailed upon by his importunities to abate of his anger, if a means could be found out to satisfy his justice?

They have a very inaccurate notion of numerical identity, imagining that things different may be made identical by union, seeing as they think numberless instances of many substances, by being united and incorporated together, becoming one and the same substance: so they make no scruple at the thought of the Son of God taking the human nature upon him by union with a particular man, whereby God and man became one Person, one individual Being.

They can easily apprehend, that this God-man to whom belonged infinite strength and power, might bear the whole weight of punishment inflicted upon the whole human race: thereby fully discharging the debt due to justice, and opening the door for mercy to take her course, without infringing upon the divine authority.

They stagger not at the doctrine of imputed righteousness: for as a man who has voluntarily paid money to the creditor of many persons, has a right to have it carried to the account of such among them as he thinks proper, so the united God and man, having paid the ransom for sin by his sufferings, which were free services to the divine justice he was under no obligation to perform, had a right to have his merits imputed, and intercession avail, for the benefit of whomsoever he pleased, and to impose such terms upon the imputation and intercession as to him seemed good.

3. It must be owned that this idea of the Redemption has had many absurb and pernicious notions engrafted upon it: the approach to God by intercession has been made a handle for turning our Salvation into a business to be managed by intrigue and interest, and to represent the court of heaven by similitude with the courts of earthly princes, to whom you cannot have access unless by their minister. And because sinful man was unworthy to approach the throne of glory without the intercession of a Mediator, therefore the Son, being of equal glory with the Father, must keep the like distance with all except a few particular favourites, without whose recommendation nobody could be heard; who themselves were too great to be addressed by the common Christian: so he could obtain nothing without making interest with the priest to pray to the saint to pray to Christ to pray to God for him; and in order to gain favour with these inferior ministers or sub-mediators, he must pay the priest and make offerings to the Saint.

Then the imputation of merit and conditions annexed to obtaining it left room for a supposal of some persons exceeding the conditions required, and by their extraordinary holiness purchasing more imputed merit than they wanted for themselves: nevertheless, they might not impute it over to such others as they pleased, but the overplus went into the treasury of the Church, from whence it was to be bought for Money, by any who had a mind to be saved without fulfilling the conditions required of him.

The inability of man to do anything acceptable to God, the direction to eschew the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and the necessity of a constant, lively trust in the Mediator, enjoined to keep the mind vigilant and vigorous in performing the practical conditions annexed, have been made a handle by our modern enthusiasts for running counter to the usages of mankind, for detesting their fellow-creatures as reprobate and abandoned, for placing all in Faith together with lecture-hearing, hymn-singing, ejaculating, alms-giving, austerities, and other means of strengthening it; and believing that the greater sinner a man is, the more glory redounds to the Mediator from saving him, and the higher trust he reposes in him.

But all these are corruptions of Christianity, inventions of crafty or self-conceited persons taking indefatigable pains to throw conceptions into the vulgar which would never have entered their heads. For the natural inference from the doctrine of a Redeemer, God, as well as man, suffering intolerable pains to expiate for sin, imposing as conditions of his intercession a resistance of the world, the flesh, and the devil, an unreserved good will and labour of love towards all fellow members of the same spiritual body, and extended beyond them to enemies and persecutors, is none other than that sin excludes from God and happiness, that using all our might to escape every commission of it is the only way to bring ourselves within the verge of that deliverance worked for us from the guilt already lying upon our heads: that God is inflexibly just, and though infinitely merciful, yet mercy cannot be had unless by means that will bring it reconcileable with justice.

Can the Redeemer who condescended to take upon him the form of a servant, to preach to the poor, to converse with publicans and sinners; can he be thought to take such state upon him, as that a poor man cannot approach him without making interest by his ministers and favourites? Can he, who is God everlasting, be ignorant of our thoughts, or not know our necessities better than any saint or priest can tell him? Can he who, freely and without asking, laid down his life a ransom for many, need the recommendation of his courtiers, or pressing importunities of his virgin mother, to obtain his intercession with the Father for blessings, which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask? Can he, who sought not his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him, be grown fond of praise and incessant adoration for the pleasure of receiving them; and not rather exact a strong and steady attachment to his name, solely as a means of keeping his disciples observant of the other condition he has required of them? Can he, who bore such heavy weight of punishment to expiate for sin, be ever reconciled to the practice of it; or suffer any psalm-singing, sermon-hunting, ejaculating, or pious fervours, which are but a breath of air or turn of thought, to commute for the absolute renunciation of it? Can he who died for all mankind, for enemies and rebels to the Father and the Godhead, be content with a narrow, selfish temper for the sake of passionate zeal for his name; with omission in the duties of our station; with negligence in improving or applying our talents to the temporal as well as spiritual benefit of the community; with religious vanity, censoriousness, arrogance, affected hypocritical humility, or exulting rejoicing at the damnation of reprobates?

4. Notwithstanding all the strong and repeated injunctions to faith, and trust, and dependence on the Redeemer, we are positively told it is not saying, Lord, Lord, but doing the Will of the Father, that will entitle a person to his share in the intercession. But God wants nothing and can receive nothing from us for himself: therefore his Will can be none other than the happiness of his creatures with whom we have intercourse, among whom our own persons are included; and every contravention of that Will is properly to be understood by the word Sin. But happiness consists in a constant serenity and satisfaction of mind, which can only be insured by a just sense of the divine Power, Providence, and Attributes; and in those externals contributing to the convenience and enjoyment of life, which can only be procured by the mutual endeavours of mankind assisting one another, each in his several station. But we are obstructed in the prosecution of our own and the general interest, by our attachment to present

pleasure and our inordinate desires, by the torrent of evil custom prompting us to covetousness, ambition, vanity, and the like, by selfishness, envy, contention, and malice; styled in religious language the flesh, the world, and the devil.

Thus it appears the doctrine of redemption has none other scope than to bring appetite and passion under the dominion of reason, that we may never fall into sin; that is, never indulge any fond humour or evil habit against what we know in our reason and our conscience to be right, nor neglect our rules of conduct for pursuing our own advantages, or the good of our fellow-creatures, to whom at any time we are capable of doing service; in both cases preferring the more important service before the less: which is the very point whereto Philosophy, if it be good for anything, ought to bring men.

Therefore, as I have said before in another place, I see no difference between a true member of Christ and a good citizen of the world, other than their method of attaining these characters. If once complete in them, both would proceed upon the same plan, a judicious, diligent, unreserved endeavour to promote happiness, as well of body as mind, in themselves and others, in the community and private persons, in friends, strangers, and enemies, in any subject wherever they can: and to bring appetite and desire of every kind obedient to the dictates of understanding.

This the Relationist thinks he can compass by his own management: if he can, it is very well; he does the Will of the Father, and will be prepared to say, Lord, Lord, in an acceptable manner the moment he shall see convincing proofs of its being necessary: but he ought to be well assured he can find his own way, before he rejects the offer of assistance.

To such as are conscious they cannot attain this perfection by their own industry, the persuasion of a Redeemer, and those religious exercises which fix their attachment to him, become fundamentals, without which they cannot be saved either from sin or the fatal consequences of it: therefore every omission of these exercises and whatever weakens their attachment, is sin likewise, because leading into that which was essentially so. But these sins being made such by their reference to others, their opposite duties too derive their value from a connection with the practical duties whereto they necessarily lead, and consequently cease to be duties whenever that connection is wanting. Therefore it behoves us to examine the tendency of our religious sentiments and exercises, and attentively to observe what effect they have upon our conduct; without which we shall fall into such as are spurious in kind, or extravagant in degree.

If our faith in the Redeemer represents him as indulgent to the vices of his worshippers, or covetous of a zealous attachment to his name for his own sake, or for any other cause than as a means of promoting the happiness of his members: if our acts of devotion tend to make ourselves or others uneasy, desponding, melancholy, superstitious, and censorious; or draw us off from the improvement of our talents, from the duties of our station, or render us less useful members of the community: they are sinful instead of being pious, they are delusions of the wicked one, rather than works of the Spirit. For God is all goodness and mercy and loving kindness, therefore the happiness of his creatures must be his grand design: nor can we ever serve him well, unless by serving as his instruments in promoting his blessed purpose.

Our future happiness is indeed incomparably more valuable than our pre-

sent: but our gracious God, who is Lord of both worlds, has pleased so to connect the interests of them both, as that we have no surer way to future happiness than by advancing that of the world wherein we live. The case may sometimes so happen, as that the road of duty shall lie through private damage, through labour, pain, distress, uneasiness, affliction, and persecution; but whatever such action does not tend nearly or remotely to the greater benefit of mankind, either in promoting the order and peace of society, the necessaries and conveniencies of life, the advancement of useful knowledge, accomplishment and virtue, or encouragement of a happy temper of mind which avails more than all the rest to present happiness, may be pronounced a folly, rather than a service to the Redeemer, or a doing the Will of the Father.

It cannot be expected that every common Christian should be able always to trace the tendency of his actions, therefore he is excusable in following his rules: if those who gave them have misguided him, the fault lies at their door; besides, the duties of men are various, such as being not engaged in active life can do good no otherwise than by setting examples of piety and regularity, ought to practise a little more strictness than is needful for others. Yet it is dangerous trusting to human guidance implicitly; every man has some judgment of his own, and his Redeemer will expect he should improve every talent entrusted with him to the utmost, be it ever so small; therefore let him use what judgment he has, to discover the real good of the world, or those of its inhabitants whom his conduct may affect; he may still fall into some excusable indiscretions, but will avoid the sin of being righteous overmuch, that is, indulging an intemperance of zeal, a religious passion covered under the appearance of extraordinary righteousness.

5. Nevertheless, these ideas, though sitting easy upon the ordinary Christian, and affording him excellent nourishment, may lie heavy upon the digestion of the reasoner, how well soever disposed to receive instruction where conveyed to him in a manner not harsh, nor nauseating to his palate. He may be apt to boggle at the notion of God omniscient needing to try the works of his hands before he could know how they were qualified, at irremissible punishment, at damages sustained by the Almighty, at a price paid to compensate them in value, at original sin, suffering by substitute, God undergoing punishment, and imputation of righteousness. Let us try then whether, by help of what has been offered in the former part of this work concerning the divine Attributes and administration of the moral world, we can understand the orthodox scheme of the Redemption, in a sense that shall make it appear reconcilable with the discoveries of reason.

We have found that all events throughout the universe proceed from causes derived originally from the Almighty, so that nothing happens anywhere, unless by his permission or appointment. We know by undoubted experience there is a mixture of evil in nature, and we may gather from the goodness of God, that his view never terminates upon evil, but he sends it always as a necessary means to work out some greater good: what makes this necessity, or how the sufferings of one species of creatures operate to the good of others, we may conjecture but cannot ascertain, but that it is necessary we may rest assured, because else it would be totally removed. Nor is it impossible the same quantity of evil may be always necessary, and may pass in rotation among the creatures: so there is no absurdity in supposing one delivered by the sufferings of another taking upon him this severe burden of public service, which must constantly be performed by somebody: as

a sentinel is released from the inclemencies of a stormy night by another being sent to relieve him.

We have taken notice of an ancient opinion, embraced by many and countenanced by the Sacred Writings, that all natural evil was the consequence of moral; and have attempted to trace their progress by ignorance and imbecility leading into wilful offence, and this drawing on punishment: so that all suffering is punitory, not inflicted immediately by the hand of God, but following by natural consequence from misbehaviour of the creatures, nor was there more reason against subjecting the race of men to this ignorance and imbecility, which must fall somewhere for the necessary purposes of the Universe, than any other set of creatures.

As all things proceed from the provisions of God whose knowledge is infinite, we cannot suppose him ignorant of any consequence to result from the provisions he made: therefore the trial he put Adam to in the garden was not needful for his own satisfaction, the issue being certain before the trial was made: and herein we are supported by the sacred text, wherein Christ is called the Lamb slain before the foundations of the world. But though the slaying could be only in designation, yet neither could it be designed before the want of it was known; nor could that be prior to the knowledge of Adam's fault, which consequently was foreseen before the foundations of the world.

Nor need we understand the trial to be that of a malefactor tried. convicted, and condemned, for the crimes he has committed; but that made by the master of the mint, when he tries and condemns a large mass of metal as below the standard, upon assaying a little piece of it. For the supposition of our being punished for the offence of our primogenitor, or becoming actual delinquents by his transgression, has constantly proved a stumbling-block which human reason could never get over: but we can easily apprehend that any one man may stand as a representative of all the rest, and by his conduct it might be tried what all other men would do in the like situation: for our actions follow precisely upon the ideas and motives present to our imagination.

We commonly impute our several vices to some defect of constitution, or bad education, or evil company, or external accident: but the assay made upon Adam manifested what human nature was, and proved a condemnation of the whole race by showing that a man placed in the most favourable situation of circumstances possible would yet be overcome by the first temptation assailing him. Thus we bring into the world with us an original sin, by which I do not understand an actual guilt, but a certain propensity to contract it upon occasion offered: and so are born children of perdition, not as involved in it already, but because fallen into a road that will lead inevitably thereinto.

This life being a preparation for the next stage of Being, the new inhabitants must enter thereinto diversely conditioned and qualified, according to the state of vital union with body they have passed through: but sinfulness, being the portion of human nature, must accompany every one who has partaken of that nature, and consequently children dying immediately after birth without commission of actual sin, must be borne down with the weight of original sin, or rather the natural inability to resist temptation, which was evidenced by Adam's misdemeanor. For we have found it probable in a former place, that future punishment is not inflicted immediately for crimes committed here, but they fix such a taint upon the soul as will prompt it to commit greater crimes hereafter, and so to perpetuate the punishment by per-

petuating offences. Therefore that state of natural weakness which inevitably draws on offences, may without impropriety be styled a state of perdition: just as if you saw a man of too easy temper, who could not say no to anybody, going to live among a company of debauchees, you would give him over for lost, though you had never yet known him guilty of any actual debauchery.

6. We have seen in the Chapter on Equality that the divine Equity insures to every creature a proportionable share in the treasures of happiness flowing among them from the divine Bounty, and that what mixture of evil is interspersed therein shall likewise be shared equally among them all, either by a rotation of natural suffering, or by a retardment or abatement of happiness: and in the Chapter on Providence, that God being Lord and Author of universal nature, wanted not power nor wisdom to contrive his plan so as that the rotation between good and evil, and equal distribution of both, should be brought about by natural causes: yet that it was not incongruous with reason to imagine he might have interwoven his own immediate acts of omnipotence into his plan, so that the operations of second causes, being a part only of the plans, should fall defective of his purpose, unless completed by his own interpositions, predetermined before the foundations of the world.

Upon this supposition, there is no difficulty in apprehending that human nature might be so framed, as by continual repetition of offence, to draw on a perpetuity of punishment; at least, a greater length and degree of Aionian punishment than fell to the share of any creatures: God in his Equity and infinite Mercy having purposed to supply this imperfection in his second causes, by acting himself in his filial character to rectify them. The Mundane Soul, or host of Angels, or disembodied Spirits having a full view of all nature, must see that by this disposition of second causes Equity was violated; they knew this Attribute would right itself again somehow or other, but in what manner they could not tell, not being able to penetrate the secret counsels of God, nor inspect that part of his plan containing his own interpositions; therefore this was the mystery which they desired, or, as the Greek word imports, stooped earnestly down to look into.

In the Chapter on Divine Justice, and the article of Demerit in the Chapter on Freewill, it has been made appear, that there is no essential nor immediate connection between offence and punishment; the connection is made by the medium of expedience; punishment being due, not strictly for the past delinquency, which cannot be undone, but for prevention of future mischief, or for attaining some benefit greater than the evil of the suffering: while this medium remains, Justice must proceed in her course whenever it can be removed, Mercy will take place. If then the sufferings of Man were of necessary advantage to the creation, the payment of that penalty was a thing of value, which God would exact as a debt due to his Justice; nor could remit without a compensation equal in value, not to himself, for he could neither be endamaged nor made amends, but to his subjects. Therefore we must conclude, that the voluntary sufferings of the Redeemer, answering the same purpose which would have been effected by the sufferings of Man, rendered the latter needless, and opened the door for mercy: and in this light may justly be styled a ransom for sin, a valuable consideration paid for the purchase of pardon.

7. We know so little of the relation we stand in to the invisible world, that it would be in vain to conjecture what particular advantages might have accrued thereto from our punishment, and consequently in what manner

the compensation operated to the same effect. But we may know that, with respect to ourselves, it tends to increase our abhorrence and dread of sin, which infinite Mercy could not remit without an amends we are not able to make ourselves, and have no room to expect will be made for us again, if we incur the penalty a second time.

As to the thing done in compensation, we may gather from the Sacred Writings, it was nothing else than a constant, uninterrupted adherence to rectitude of conduct against all temptations whatsoever; for Jesus was like unto us in all things, sin only excepted: and because extreme pain, uneasiness, and desperation, are the hardest attacks for human nature to resist, therefore he is said to have paid the ransom upon the cross; not but that we may allow his holy life to have been a part of the payment. Thus upon examining in what species of coin the ransom was paid, we find it to have been a perpetual course of virtue and right action, an absolute dominion of reason over the inferior faculties, an effectual resistance of all pleasure, indulgence, desire, pain, terror, and other uneasinesses. For the plan of universal nature having been so drawn as that the self-denials, disappointments, and sufferings of human creatures, were made of necessary use to other Beings, they could not be remitted without breaking the law of nature, and endamaging the creation: therefore all that could be done for man was, to draw out the sting of them, and render them no evils, by enduing him with a vigour of mind capable to bear them willingly.

If it be thought absurd to imagine that evil can be turned into a thing indifferent by any disposition of mind whatever, I may keep myself in countenance by the authority of the ancient philosophers, particularly the Stoics, who strongly maintained that pain was no evil, but made so by opinion, that is, by the weakness of our mind: and we see their theory frequently confirmed by experience, for none of us but can bear little disappointments, vexations, and pains, without being hurt by them; and this not by insensibility, for we perceive the displeasure and feel the smart; but suffer no diminution thereby in our present enjoyment and satisfaction of mind. Therefore they insisted that virtue, or rectitude, or wisdom, for these were synonymous terms, was the only sure way to happiness, and that the Wise man must be always invariably happy beyond the power of fortune to hurt him.

But though right in theory they were romantic in expecting to see it verified in practice, or laying it down for an indispensable rule of conduct: for most of us can bear little self-denials and pains, and some of us pretty severe ones of one particular kind; the soldier can endure wounds; the student, labours of thought; the ploughman, labours of body; the nurse, watchings; the surgeon, nastiness; but none can bear evils of all sorts and degrees of intenseness without suffering cruelly by them; for human nature is unequal to the task. But this height of perfection which nature cannot reach, it may be raised to by divine interposition: and the man Jesus having this interposition to assist him continually, might actually be that Wise man which the philosophers sought in vain, and which was nowhere else to be found out in imagination.

8. Therefore the office performed by God in his second Persona or character of the Son, was to invigorate the human soul of Jesus, that his understanding might never be overpowered by appetite, or passion, or any impulse of imagination whatever, but constantly have the determination of his will in every single instance; being supplied perpetually by the divine agency with what was wanting to the natural strength of man, and to make a

whole life of rectitude complete, it was necessary the divine agency should begin to operate early.

We commonly reckon children do not arrive at the use of reason, nor the capacity of good and evil, until seven years old, because we cannot discern anything of a moral character appearing in their actions before: but we know not what imperceptible misconduct they may have fallen into sooner, nor how early it may be needful to strengthen the growing faculty to prepare it for a vigorous maturity: we may presume the preparation cannot be made too early. Therefore the filial character accompanied the Soul of Jesus from his birth, and he grew in grace and wisdom in proportion to the growing powers it had to govern, and opposition it had to contend with.

But this wisdom was moral wisdom, of which I have elsewhere given mine idea, distinguishing it from natural wisdom: it is rather a vigour than capaciousness of understanding: the same as the virtue of Prudence; weighed more with the greater good and the rules of duty pointing thereto than with present pleasure or ease. For prudence does not consist in sagacity nor extent of knowledge: he that knows much but makes no use of it, is the more imprudent upon that account, and he is the most prudent man who makes the best profit of his knowledge, be it ever so small.

The world in general lies under great mistakes upon this article; they see only the outward action, so judge of the character by the greatness of the exploits performed: whereas a man of uncommon abilities may do great things with a very little share of virtue, perhaps with none at all, by help of vanity, ambition, or the desire of excelling. Your writers of Romance give their heroes an immense estate, irresistible strength, exuberant health, constitutional intrepidity, penetration, and extraordinary brightness of parts: never reflecting that with all these advantages one might work wonders without being a hero. To make him truly such, they ought to describe him doing more than common with only common endowments: nor could we with certainty pronounce any man a complete hero, unless we knew he had done all that could be done with the powers and opportunities put into his hands. For the actions of wisdom must be such as lie in every one's power. There is a rule of rectitude for the porter, the cobbler, the nurse, and the savage, as well as for the prince, the politician, the general, and the philosopher; and whoever could persevere in it invariably, would be equally a wise man in every station.

This being the case, it was fitting the divine power should not be joined with extraordinary endowments of body and mind, lest the effects of them should be confounded with the fruits of moral wisdom: therefore, the filial character was united to an illiterate carpenter, who we need not imagine gained more knowledge thereby in mathematics, astronomy, geography, policy, metaphysics, or other sciences, than any common carpenter might have attained, if we could suppose him never once to have neglected the improvement of his talents. What supernatural knowledge he had was imparted to him, and the wonders he worked were performed by the Father, in the same manner as those of Moses and the prophets.

9. By the help of what has been argued in the two foregoing sections, we may remove the grand stumbling-block of a suffering God; for we have seen the efficacy of moral wisdom when complete, to render the mind proof against every evil, so that it might voluntarily endure an extremity of torment without suffering by it. Therefore we need not try to make subtile distinctions between the divine and human natures, to show that one might

suffer when the other did not: for neither the united Christ, nor the man Jesus thus divinely supported, was in a state of evil or unhappiness in the very moment of his greatest agonies.

Perhaps it will be thought lessening our obligation to the Saviour, to suppose him effecting our Redemption without hurt to himself, and representing it as an act of prudence, which his wisdom must show him was expedient for his own sake, no less than for the sake of his fellow-members; for Jesus had a soul to be saved as well as we, and he did save it together with ours.

To this objection I shall answer in the first place; that I am justified in this representation by the writer to the Hebrews, who tells us that Jesus, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame; that is, he acted for his own interest jointly with ours. In the next place, to go upon the footing of human reason, let us recollect what has been said in two Chapters of the first Volume, on the Ultimate Good and on Benevolence, and in several other places; wherein it has been shown from the survey of human nature, that each man's own happiness is his proper end of action, which he ought invariably to pursue in every part of his conduct; and that benevolence was nothing else than a placing his happiness in the good of others, or rather a lively, firm persuasion of his own interest being inseparably connected with the general: therefore, where a man has this persuasion, he is as sincere and hearty in the services he does to another, as in any prudential measures he takes for his own private interest, and his benevolence is of the right genuine stamp.

But, you will say, if he endure great labour and pain, and sustain damage for another's benefit, the obligation is greater than if he could do it with ease and at no expense to himself. It may be so: yet if he can support the trouble, the pain, and the damage cheerfully, it proves the glow of his kindness the ferventer, and consequently heightens the obligation and the endearment to such as are sensible what it is that supports him. For why should we desire to have those that serve us suffer in the performance? It is unnatural for a man knowingly and voluntarily to make himself unhappy; or if he could do it, how should we be the better than if he performed the same services without being unhappy? Could we model the dispositions of persons about us with a wish, what could we wish more for our advantage than that they should esteem our interests their own, and take a real pleasure in undergoing the severest trials for our sakes? Honour is there most merited where it can be most usefully placed; therefore, those arduous exercises of virtue are most laudable and meritorious, which are performed most cheerfully, because they will be done most effectually; for a man can never go through his work well, so long as it is irksome to him.

It would be impious to imagine the organs of Jesus rendered insensible, or that he did not feel the same weight of anguish, disgrace, and agony of despair, when he cried out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? as any of us should have done in the like situation; but that weight was overbalanced by the contemplation of his own interest being involved in that of the creation, and by the joy of opening a passage, whereby all mankind might arrive at the like tranquillity of mind under the severest pressures.

10. This brings me to inquire, in what manner the sufferings of the Redeemer operated to our benefit: and I apprehend it to have been, not

by taking off any service we were destined to perform for the universe, for this would be sacrificing the general interest to the advantage of a few: nor by working a change in the constitution of human nature, for this would look like something of a charm and magic: nor yet by turning the purposes of God from resentment into mercy, for this would be to represent him liable to passion and mutability: but by setting an example which might lead us into the method of performing the hardest of our services with the same tranquillity and satisfaction of mind that he did.

We know the force of sympathy, and how much example is more prevalent than precept: a coward may face dangers and despise wounds in company of the brave, that had made him shudder in the apprehension, while alone. We know what incredible tortures the first disciples were enabled to endure by continual contemplation of their Master's example, and their assiduity in those devotions and institutions, which contributed to fix such contemplation more strongly upon their minds. It is likely Eve would have resisted the temptation, had there been another woman to have rejected the apple with scorn in her presence. Plato tells us, Virtue is so beautiful that if we could once see her unveiled, we should be so enamoured of her charms, as to despise all things else in comparison with her: so there wanted only one perfect Wise man, in whose actions she might stand visible to view, to bring all others into admiration of Wisdom, by showing its efficacy to turn pain into ease, and render the soul proof against all evil and unhappiness.

Therefore we are not to imagine our ransom so fully paid as that there is nothing left for us to pay: we are captives still, but have the key put into our hands that will unlock the padlocks of our chains, so we must use the key to effect our deliverance; nor has Christ so saved us, but that we must still work out our own salvation, in such fear and trembling as is consistent with a confidence of success. The lawyers make a distinction between an obligation rendered void, or only voidable: both which in common acceptation are reckoned much the same, but I conceive it very material to preserve in mind the like distinction here, though we need not always express it in our discourses, nor do I apprehend it heterodox to say, that we are not yet actually redeemed, but only made redeemable. The hand-writing against us is not blotted out, yet it may well be termed so, because we have a sponge given us to wipe it away ourselves. The debt is not discharged, but a die is out for us by which we may stamp the current coin wherewith to discharge it fully. The imitation then of our grand exemplar is the one thing needful for our deliverance, which must be worked out by stamping upon our minds that character of moral wisdom which secured him continually against the approach of evil and misery: and until we can compass that, our redemption remains incomplete.

11. From hence we may see the imputation of righteousness, the mediation and intercession for sinners still continuing such, are only figurative expressions, to denote that we derive our righteousness from Christ, and are enabled, by the medium of his example and aids, to fulfil the laws of nature, which were impracticable by us before. Yet still the righteousness must be actually derived to ourselves and become our own, before it can be imputed to us: and though he has rendered the way passable by going before us, we must travel it after him with our own feet, or shall never arrive at our journey's end; we may expect to be helped forward, but not carried for any the most pressing, repeated importunities whatever. Therefore, our trust, our devotion, and our religious exercises, will not

commute for the want of that righteousness which is the sole operating cause of our salvation, and which we may now attain by derivation from him: nor are they of any other avail than for the effect they may have upon ourselves towards generating in us the like moral wisdom, as exemplified by our leader, in the ready resistance of pleasure, desire, and temptation, and unreluctant endurance of the severest trials.

The sum of our imitation then, and the substance of our duty, is the same with what was comprised by the old philosophers in two words, BEAR and FORBEAR: but they could only tell us what would make for our good, whereas he has set us an example, and prescribed institutions and methods, whereby we may learn to bear and forbear with content and satisfaction to ourselves. For he proclaims to us, Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; for my yoke is easy and my burden light: he has made it so, not by taking off the weight, but by inuring our shoulders to bear it without galling. Thus Christianity makes no alteration in the ultimate end of action, each man's own happiness remains still his proper aim.

But there are two roads to happiness, gratification, pleasure, ease, or whatever else you will call it; one by procuring the objects of desire, the other by bringing desire to the objects at hand, or which conduce most largely to our future advantage. The former we are ready enough to pursue of our own accord: the latter our redeemer has made passable for us, and taught us to walk in. Therefore, happiness, enjoyment, and ease of heart, being still our proper point of pursuit, it is a spurious piety, a preposterous perversion of his doctrine, to teach men that they merit heaven by voluntary austerities, self-denials, mortifications, and afflicting themselves: for these things are abhorrent to nature, of no intrinsic worth or obligation, nor of any value unless when necessary to work out some greater advantage, either discerned by ourselves, or evidenced to us by rules received from those who know better. We are enjoined indeed to deny ourselves, to subdue our passions, to mortify the flesh, to undergo toils and labours; but then it is in order to prevent their being troublesome to us, and proving a hindrance in the prosecution of our truest interests, and to inure us gradually by practice to a firmness of mind we cannot assume at once: yet the sooner we can attain it, with the less regret and trouble to ourselves we can enter upon the progress, the better it is, and the more acceptable.

Thus in the very exercise of self-denial, we are striving for our future enjoyment, and may laudably strive for our present ease and satisfaction in the manner of supporting it. We are commanded to take up our cross and follow our leader, we are not commanded to make crosses for ourselves, but take them willingly when cast in our way by the courses of Providence, for so did our leader: he did not make his own cross, nor gratuitously cause himself to be nailed to it; he came eating and drinking, conversed with a cheerful serenity among publicans and sinners, assisted to promote the innocent mirth of a wedding, practised no self-imposed austerities, penances, and abstinences; for when he went up into the wilderness, he went not up by choice, but was led of the Spirit; that is, by some secret intimation of its expedience; while allowable he avoided the persecution of the Jews, and at last prayed that the cup might pass from him, but concluding, Nevertheless, not my Will be done, but thine, O Father. Thus, if we will follow him, obedience to the dispensations of Providence is our road, we must not pretend to voluntary services nor meritorious performances; we are to do the Will of the Father, not our own Will, nor may choose for ourselves

even in the most arduous and perilous undertakings; any more than a soldier quartered in the Capital, in ease, security, and plenty, may desert his colours to join a corps going abroad upon a dangerous expedition.

But our Father is not a severe, cruel task-master, but a gracious, indulgent parent: he has showered down his blessings of all kinds in abundance upon earth, on purpose that we should enjoy them with thankfulness, and spread and improve them among our fellow-creatures, where it can be done innocently without future detriment. He best knows what abstinences and hard trials to call us to, and when such services will be real services to his creation: it is our business to keep a watchful eye upon the rules of duty and expedience, to hold ourselves in readiness to obey the call, and to take up whatever cross is thrown before us, looking up to the pattern that is set before us, and trusting for the promised assistance of the Comforter, if necessary, for effectuating our endeavours to bear it without galling; still searching about for any lawful means of avoiding it, but concluding with a sincere and willing resignation, Nevertheless, not our Will be done, but thine, O Father.

And I apprehend this may serve as a clue for understanding many texts of Scripture which seem hard of digestion; such as selling all our goods to give to the poor, turning the left cheek to him that has smitten the right, hating father and mother, wife and children, and the like, which are not to be taken for rules of conduct for us to practise, but directions what temper and firmness of mind we are to put on, enabling us to perform things the most reluctant to human nature, whenever the Will of the Father, manifested by particular situation of circumstsnce, that is, whenever necessity or duty shall so require.

12. Perhaps I shall be thought too rigorous in describing the righteousness which is to be the sole operating cause of our salvation; such perfect ungrudging resistance both of pleasure and pain, as above supposed to constitute it, being impracticable: but if we weigh the matter impartially without suffering our self-fondness to cast its weight of prejudice into the scale, we shall find nothing less can suffice effectually for our purpose. Our Redeemer requires it, for he enjoins us to take up our cross and follow him, to die unto the world, to crucify the flesh with the lusts thereof. The voice of heathen philosophy requires it, for that declares happiness reserved only for the Wise man, who becomes such by a total Apathy: by which is not to be understood an utter insensibility, a want of all affection or preference of one thing above another; but an exemption from all passion or perturbation, a fixed tranquillity of mind not to be thrown off the seat by any allurement, or cross accident, or terror whatsoever.

But this is a voice only, informing us where lies our goal, and leaving us to get to it as well as we can: whereas the Redeemer leads on the way by his example, prescribes certain methods for bringing us into breath, and assists us by the promised Comforter to invigorate our efforts: and ecclesiastical history testifies what almost incredible achievements have been performed with these aids. Nevertheless, with all these aids the work has not yet been completely perfected: for still there is none that doeth good, no not one; the very best have their failings, and the most obedient feel the yoke sometimes galling to their shoulders: from whence it seems to follow, there is something remaining to be done in the other world; and the probability of room being left there for completing the work of Redemption may be gathered from several considerations.

If I do not egregiously mistake the doctrines of our Church, I may lay

down that the sacrifice of Christ was offered for the whole human race, without exception of times, places, or persons; nevertheless, that no man can reap the benefit of it without a particular application of it to himself by faith in the Redeemer. It is not here the place to examine what we are to understand by a saving Faith: this shall be reserved for the next Chapter. We need only now observe, that it must be an act of the Will, or rather a habit acquired by our own industry: so that no one of all the sons of Adam will miss his share of the Redemption purchased, unless by his own fault. Yet what multitudes of Adam's sons have passed off this earthly stage in the four thousand years before Christ appeared!

It may be said that they had the promise of him that was to come: but how did they understand the promises? I will not pretend to say what might be the thoughts of some very few of the most enlightened, but it is well known the Jews in general expected a temporal deliverer; and though they spoke of a redemption from sin, they meant thereby a deliverance from the distresses fallen upon them for their past sins, not a rescue from the dominion of sin for the future. The apostles themselves retained the same notion to the last of their Master's conversing among them; for when at Emaus they related the story of the crucifixion, they concluded with this reflection, But we trusted it had been he that should have redeemed Israel: they were so far from having a right faith in the Redemption, that they had not a right understanding of the word, nor knew that the price of their ransom was then actually paid.

But allowing as largely as you please to the chosen people, how small a part were they of mankind! the rest of whom never heard of the promises. And since the promulgation of Christianity, there are many nations of Mahometans, heathens, and savages, where the sound of it has not been heard, or been lost again from among them. Add to this that in the midst of Christendom there are multitudes of children who never arrive at a capacity of actually applying the benefits of the Redemption to themselves: many grown persons bred up in ignorance and error, who never had an opportunity of attaining a just notion of it: and when we reflect how grievously our Religion has been perverted and corrupted by some of its most zealous votaries, there may have been men of serious thought and sober judgment, who, without their own fault, having taken their estimate of it from these disguises, were excusable in rejecting it, and stand in the case of such as never heard of it. If then Christ died for all men, and none can fail of receiving the benefits he purchased for them without their own wilful negligence: all those above mentioned, who have had no fair opportunity of embracing his gracious offer, must be afforded it elsewhere.

And to convince us that it has been afforded elsewhere, let us recollect the principal and most authentic of our Creeds, called the Apostles, wherein is an article, that Jesus Christ, the only Son, our Lord, descended into hell. What can we understand by this descent of the united Christ into hell or the region of departed souls, unless that he continued to act there in his filial character upon the human soul of Jesus? But was this agency continued for nothing? or whatever else he meant by the descent, was it made for no purpose? and what other purpose can be conceived more worthy, than for completing those benefits of the Redemption worked here, which could not be conveyed perfectly upon earth.

Then if we consider the finer and smaller composition of a vehicular or spiritual body, bearing a nearer proportion to the sphere of the spirit's presence than our present gross bodies, which we move by long strings of com-

plicated engines, wherein are many mechanical motions interfering with our voluntary, and not to be corrected by them without much labour and practice; it will appear probable they are much more manageable, and that the force of example with our endeavours to apply it, may operate more strongly to work new habits; especially if there should be such a sentient language as suggested in the Vision, whereby the very ideas passing in our Pattern might be conveyed more exactly and fully than can be done here through any of our senses.

This greater suppleness of the vehicular nature above the gross corporeal may account for the shortness of the Redeemer's continuance among them: for as much might be done in a day and a half there as required three years and a half's ministry here. And as upon earth he left his Apostles to transmit the benefits of his life and passion by their successors to the latest posterity; so by his example in the Hades, he may have led some of the vehicular inhabitants into such perfect habit of endurance and forbearance, as that they might serve for examples to all others of the human race, who were disposed to take the benefit of them.

13. No doubt this will be counted a novel doctrine, but novelty alone is no more a sufficient ground of rejecting than receiving a thing: the cause must be tried at the bar of sober reason and sincere piety, and I leave it to the consideration of every man who is not afraid to entertain a thought, even to the honour of the Divine Goodness and Equity, that was not taught him by his school-master; whether it does not necessarily follow from the article of an universal Redemption, purchased for all who do not wilfully refuse or neglect to embrace it, compared with the experience of multitudes passing off this worldly stage without any possibility of embracing it.

Yet there is a very pernicious consequence may be drawn by some who are too ready to turn everything into a handle for indulging their vicious appetites, which I must be careful to obviate. We see men wonderfully prone to procrastination: they put off their repentance from day to day till the hour of death, and will put it off then, too, if taught to expect another opportunity afterwards. But they have no just room to infer from anything suggested above, that they shall ever have another: the Scriptures so expressly declare our condition in the next life dependent upon our conduct here, that nothing but the absolute necessity of solving the impartiality of our Maker and of our Redeemer could warrant us to imagine that an opportunity shall be given hereafter to such as had none afforded them here; or a further space allowed ourselves to run the rest of our race, which, with our utmost endeavours and best application of our aids, we are not able to finish in the body. But with respect to us who have had a part of our course marked out to us upon earth, if we neglect to run so much as we can, the necessity ceases; for the divine Justice stands approved in having once made us the offer, nor can we expect ever to be admitted upon the lists a second time: therefore it still remains true, that as the tree falls so it lies.

Children called away before they came to the knowledge of good and evil have never had their tree of choice and judgment grow at all: so it cannot yet have fallen anywhere. Heathens, savages, persons brought up from their infancy in ignorance, wickedness, delusion, and error, or who have had our Religion presented to them under such disguises as made it appear hideous to common sense and honest reason, have yet had some sparks of conscience twinkling in their breasts: and according as they improved by these, their tree lies in a disposition to be transplanted into another soil, where they may cultivate it to the bearing of salutary fruits. But the tree

that with the benefit of air, sunshine, and watering, still continues barren, must have contracted a canker by ill management; and can never flourish again transplanted into any soil, but is fit for nothing else than to be cut down and cast into the fire.

As there is a constant communication of action between the grosser and finer parts of our composition, it is not improbable, even upon the contemplation of human nature, that vice may work such a foulness into the spiritual body, as will destroy that suppleness and pliancy to the command of the purely spiritual part wherein its health consists, and thereby render it incapable of receiving benefit from any examples or aids whatever which may be afforded.

14. Thus there is good room for Christian charity to hope, that although none can be saved unless through Christ, yet many may be saved who, during their abode upon earth, never were in him: for he may have other sheep which are not yet brought into the fold, some to whom it has never yet been opened, and other stragglers because they have never heard or never understood the call. And the same charity will extend the pale of salvation to take in all the various sects of Christians: for our judgments depend upon our natural temperament, our education, the company we have conversed amongst, the examples we have seen, and the manner wherein subjects have been proposed to us; therefore different persons, of the most unbiassed sincerity and honest industry, will judge variously upon the same points; but if they carefully live up to the best lights afforded them by the dispensations of Providence, ordinary and extraordinary, they cannot be ranked under the class of those who wilfully neglect to embrace the Redemption offered. Nevertheless, we are not to imagine it an indifferent thing what sect or what religion we list ourselves into: for how much soever men may be saved in all, there is but one only religion and sect for each particular man wherein he can walk securely.

And this may serve to expound the doctrine of the strait gate: for strait is the gate and narrow is the way by which each particular man may pass into life; if he deviates into the broad road among the multitudes, he will find his journey end in destruction; nevertheless, those multitudes may have their several narrow paths and their wickets through which, if they persevere in their way, they may find entrance though he could not. For we must understand everything in Scripture with a reference to our use and our conduct, not to empty speculation.

The question, Are there many that shall be saved, was probably a matter of mere curiosity, but the answer turned it to a more important purpose: which we can least of all imagine to be for nourishing our spiritual pride, and justifying our ill nature in exulting at the damnation of multitudes; we ought rather to take it as an alarm to our carelessness and spur to our indolence. Strive to enter at the strait gate, for strait are the gates, and narrow are the ways leading into life, and few there be who find that by which alone you can pass. There is a certain rule of rectitude for each man suited to few others besides himself, which at his utmost peril he must employ all his circumspection to discern, and all his diligence to pursue.

And we may observe the like maxim holds good with respect to our success in this world: multitudes arrive at a competence of fortune, ease, credit, and enjoyment by very various ways, but the way that will succeed with one man will answer for few others. The same labours of hand or brain, hardships and dangers, would be faulty in one, which are necessary duties and commendations to another; nor is it always easy for each to hit upon

his right method, and succeed in it, without careful forethought and continual application. For providence has so interwoven the interests of mankind by the distribution of talents and opportunities among them, that each has a particular part to act, by the due performance of which he may most effectually serve himself, and his fellow-creatures.

15. Nor does there want probability of the like intertexture of interests between this world and the next; and that our employments on this present stage, if rightly pursued, are preparatory to the rest of our journey through matter, fitting us for the peculiar functions we shall have to perform in the communion of saints. This seems evidenced by the very various allotments made among us here: some are but just born and die; some are bred up in ignorance, error, and profligateness; some have little more understanding or capacity of looking up to their Maker than the brutes; and others have been raised to extraordinary heights of knowledge and piety that could scarce be credited in human nature.

Therefore, though the promulgation of Christianity upon earth were necessary for the human race in general, yet we must conclude from the limitation set to it by nature and Providence, that it was not necessary for every individual: the interests of the whole being so connected, that the blessings imparted to a few would redound to the benefit of many. For our gracious and righteous Father cannot be supposed so very unequally partial in his most necessary gifts, as his dispensations among us here make him appear to have been: but the elect were chosen, not so much for their own sakes, as for channels of conveyance by which the waters of life might be diffused among their fellow-creatures both in this world and the next. Hence we are all to consider ourselves as public persons, our talents being distributed among us with a further view beyond the uses we can make of them here, and our very virtues given us for the benefit of others jointly with our own: as we have likewise an interest in theirs, how little soever we may stand concerned with them at present.

This confirms what I have laid down a little before, that obedience to the call of Heaven manifested by the talents and situation assigned us, is our proper rule of conduct: we are not to aspire at extraordinary achievements nor degrees of sanctity above our forces, for we are instruments employed in the public service, and God knows what service is wanted of us, what abilities and graces are needful to perform it. He was able of the veriest stones to have raised up children unto Abraham; it were a small thing with him to have inspired into us the zeal of Apostles, or the intelligence and seraphic piety of Angels; he might have done it with a word, as when he said, Let there be light: be sure he has given us the endowments requisite for the part we have to execute in his numerous family of human creatures.

Therefore we need not despond or murmur if we cannot rise to those fervours of Faith and greatness of Works whereof we have seen or heard examples: for there is a duty of content, even with respect to righteousness, not indeed bounded by so many limits as in other things. There may be cases wherein it would be faulty to increase our riches or our reputation though we could, but here the limitation ought only to be set by our powers: let us then rather rejoice than repine at them, how small soever they be, and be careful to omit no opportunity of improving them; for small as they are, we shall find them one day turn to more important advantages than we can now be aware of.

We may regard this life as a school to fit us for the employments we are

to follow in the world: some go through the whole school, from thence are forwarded to the university, and put upon different lines of learning; some are called off in the midway, and others never put to school at all: the parents are the proper judges whether any and what preparation is necessary for the life to be engaged in afterwards: but the lad who neglects the rudiments of learning judged requisite for him, can never regain them afterwards, but must prove a worthless and miserable man. So our lengths and courses of life are wisely allotted us by our heavenly Father, no doubt with a view to future uses: so that he who has little has no lack, and he who has much has nothing over. We are not to hanker after the works assigned to others because we may fancy them more meritorious, but make the best improvements we can of our own time and tasks: for if we neglect our rudiments, we shall go out into the great world of spiritual bodies unfit for any further improvement in the professions we are destined to, useless to the community, and wretched in ourselves.

16. Therefore as boys are not sent to school for sake of the plays and diversions they find there, although allowed as many as consist with their learning; so we are placed in this school of life, not for the sake of the enjoyments abounding here, but to qualify us for a much longer life capable of far greater enjoyments and miseries: and we may be sure the line of learning marked out for us by Providence here, is the properest to suit us for the business we shall have to follow hereafter. Nevertheless our indulgent Father has been pleased to make the mental and bodily happiness of ourselves and our fellow-creatures in this world, the mark of direction for us to aim at; this then we are to promote with all our skill and industry, being well assured that in so doing we shall do our best towards promoting the interests of both in the next.

He has likewise hung out many enjoyments within our reach: those then we may thankfully gather, and even contrive for their procurement; using the good things of this world as possessions, not enslaved by them as captives; laying our measures carefully for the morrow, but taking no thought for what their success shall be on the morrow; pleased with success when it comes, but not expecting it; enjoying, never indulging the gratifications of appetite; pursuing pleasures because we approve the pursuit, not because we cannot help it nor live without them; submitting our will to the Will of Heaven, but submitting desire to the control of our own will. But he has been pleased oftentimes to make labour, trouble, and self-denial, the road to public and private happiness: we must therefore strike into the rugged road, not because it is rugged, but whenever having that tendency pointed out to us by our own observation or rules received from more experienced travellers.

Some exercises of voluntary self-denial are needful to harden our shoulders for the burdens we may have to bear: therefore in the choice of these exercises, we are to regard our situation of life and the works we shall probably be called upon to execute; for obedience is our business, we are to do nothing arbitrarily, nor without the proper call. And in all our difficulties it is our duty and our praise so far to consult present pleasure, as it can be attained by going through them with cheerfulness and alacrity: therefore we are voluntarily to engage in those whereof there is a probability we may learn to support them with alacrity, avoiding such as our constitution or natural temper of minds renders us unable ever to go through without galling, for these we are not called to; yet making daily some improvement towards turning things irksome into matters of indifference.

If troubles fall upon us or our dearest friends, greater than we can yet bear without being hurt, they are exercises imposed upon us by our Father for our and their benefit: for there is an endurance of pain, vexation, and labour, acquired mechanically by the frequent repetition of them. If we can help ourselves to hasten the acquisition by our own efforts to patience, it is so much the better; yet however acquired, it is an advantage gained; therefore we have reason to kiss the rod, though not to court it. Nor need we be terrified at the approach of dangers that may befal us, for he will with the temptation also make a way to escape: not always by warding off the blow, but by enabling to escape the evil of it with a firmness of mind superior to the pressure. But whatever improvement of endurance or forbearance we can make any way, is a step towards our adoption and incorporation, whereby we become members of Christ, children of God, and denizens of the kingdom of heaven.

17. For though it be wholesome and easy of conception to the vulgar, it is extremely hard for the man of reflection, to imagine heaven local; that God has a right hand and a left, or that there is any one seat nearer to him than another. For God is omnipresent, alike almighty, great, and glorious, in every point of space: filling the supercelestial regions, the starry vortices, the depths of the sea, the bowels of the earth, the mansions of the blessed, and habitations of the reprobate. Therefore it is not change of place, but change of condition, that transports the creature into heaven. Were our faculties so purified and enlarged as that we might see God as he is, we should instantly find ourselves at his right hand without stirring from our seats. On the contrary, Milton very judiciously describes Satan carrying hell about with him wherever he went: so we may say that while leading between Ithuriel and Zephon, he was in hell and they in heaven; he an outcast banished to an immeasurable distance from the presence of God, they attendant Spirits ministering before the throne of glory.

The Scripture abounds in figures and imagery, and blends them promiscuously together in such manner that it is not always easy to distinguish their several applications: of which we have seen instances in the last Chapter with respect to the Son of God, the Logos, and the two natures of Christ. From hence a handle has been taken for introducing a great deal more of the mysterious and the cabalistical into our Religion than was needful, or than has done it any good. This inaccuracy of style we may presume was properest for the Jews, as being suitable to their gross taste; but learning being now become general, and the thoughts of our common Christians having taken a more rational turn, it seems eligible to keep our ideas and our expressions as clear, as steady, and as distinct as we can.

Therefore in my humble opinion it might have been as well, if the compilers of our Litany had chosen some other form of words instead of, Spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood; and afterwards by thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, by thy precious death and burial, Good Lord deliver us: for our prayers here by the introduction are addressed to the holy Trinity, the one God, to whom these expressions seem scarce properly applicable, though they might be to Christ. For we are taught to compare the union of the two natures in Christ with the vital union of soul and body in ourselves, which together make one man. Therefore the man may claim to himself whatever belongs either to his soul or body, and I may properly say, My understanding, my memory, my blood, and my bones: but when we speak of them separately, we cannot apply to one what belongs to the other; for it would be absurd

to talk of my Body's understanding, my Body's memory, my Soul's blood, or my Soul's bones: and though I must expect to die before many years run out, yet I trust my soul will not die when I do. In like manner, it seems as great a solecism in modern language to say the blood, the death, the burial of God, notwithstanding his gracious union with human nature, as it would be to speak of the blood, the death, the burial of a soul, notwithstanding its vital union with body. Had the phrase run, With the precious blood of thy Christ, by the agony and passion, and so forth, of thy Christ, it might have contained as much devotion and piety, and been less liable to the cavils of the adversary.

But it sometimes happens that men of great learning and true piety, having too much contempt of human reason and disregard of human nature, repeat the words of other good men passing before them without exactly weighing their purport; not considering that an expression which was perfectly proper for one age may be injudicious in another: nor sufficiently studying that text which teaches, that the letter killeth, but the Spirit maketh alive. So that a man may destroy himself by adhering literally to the Scripture, much more by copying literally the expressions of ancient Fathers, and former doctors of the Church.

The Gospel was preached to the poor, but designed for general use; therefore delivered in a manner conformable to the ways of thinking which generally prevailed at that time. But it is of great importance to distinguish between the fundamental doctrines which ought always to be preserved inviolate, and those accommodated to the conceptions and prejudices of the vulgar, with which we may lawfully take the necessary liberties for bringing them suitable to the notions current among us at this day. For popular ideas vary greatly in a course of time, and insensibly take a tincture from the notions and discourses of the learned. The discoveries in astronomy and other sciences have given us a very different conception of the ethereal regions from what was entertained of old: and the custom of examining into particulars, and judging for ourselves, have made us more averse against taking things in the gross, without being shown a consistency in their several parts.

Therefore it might be imprudent to press upon any man the Ascension of a human body, consisting of flesh, blood, bones, entrails, organs of sensation, engines of digestion, and engines of discharge; and a literal session or inhabitancy under that form in a place close by the throne of God, for these things might stagger many well-disposed persons, and give large handle for disputation to such as are ready to take hold of it. Perhaps it would not be heterodox to close the work of the Redemption with the descent into Hades, ascribing the Resurrection, together with all that followed afterwards upon earth, to the power of the Father, not of the Christ. For it is not easy to conceive how the most consummate rectitude of Will, or power of endurance and forbearance, could enable a human soul to re-animate its body, to convey it through the key-hole when the doors were shut, and mount up with it into the air.

I do not mean to insinuate that these were nothing more than apparitions, for one cannot understand them so without wresting the Scripture violently, especially that appearance wherein Thomas was concerned: but though we cannot deny them to be real facts, we may very consistently with Scripture believe them miraculous facts, wherein God acted in his Paternal, not his Filial character. So that Christ was no more the efficient

cause of his resurrection, his entrance into a close room, or his ascension up into the air in a cloud, than Moses was of the rod turning into a serpent, of water gushing from the rock upon a stroke of his wand, or of quails or manna showering down from the air.

Nor were those miracles any otherwise efficacious towards the Redemption, than the other miracles worked during the ministry of Christ upon earth, given for confirmation of Faith in the beholders, not for operating anything in the constitution of human nature, or completing the ransom for sin. And when that purpose was answered, that is, as soon as the ascending body was out of sight, it was disposed of in the same manner as the bodies of other men who are dead and rotten; and the human soul was returned back to Hades, or wherever other souls who partake, or stand in a capacity of partaking in the like righteousness, reside.

Therefore I apprehend it advisable to leave every man to form his own conception of the session at the right hand of God, the present condition or employment of the Redeemer, and intercession still continued for mortal men: which conception he will form very variously, according to the degree of grossness or refinement of his imagination. For any set of ideas, best suited to his size of comprehension and usual trains of thinking, will suffice; provided they satisfy him, that everything necessary to be done for his salvation by another has been fully achieved: and every assistance requisite for effectuating his endeavours in what still remains to be done by himself, is obtained, and stands ready for him upon his using the methods of applying it prescribed in the Gospel: for this I take to be the sole, material, and fundamental article of Christian Faith.

18. I have now given my idea of the Redemption and other doctrines relative thereto; wherein to my apprehension they stand in the light of a credible and rational scheme, consistent with the knowledge we derive from experience and observation upon human nature. If it should appear in the same light to others, it will be but just that they should take it for the genuine sense of Scripture, and doctrines of the Church: for where expressions are obscure or capable of various interpretations, every private man, much more the dictates of authority, have a right to be understood in the most rational construction. But credibility and consonance with reason are not of themselves alone sufficient proofs of a doctrine being true, yet these were all that fell properly under my cognizance: for it must be remembered, that my province is human reason, and I cannot pretend to find any positive proofs of the Christian system within its precincts.

It has been said by an eminent pillar of the Church, that the light of nature leads to the necessity of a Redemption, by discovering the corruption of the soul, depravity of the faculties, and perverseness of the will, which drive us continually into offences against the law of God written in our hearts, and thereby render us obnoxious to divine Justice without hopes of pardon or being able to satisfy it, otherwise than by our endless punishment. But I must own that my optics are not clear enough to discern these things by the light of nature. I see plainly that man is prone to evil, our appetites get the mastery over our reason, nor do the best of us persevere in an unerring course of righteousness, but offend daily against the Will of God manifested to us by the contemplation of his works; and I fear these offences will draw on their adequate punishment: but why the punishment or the depravity must be perpetual, I do not see.

There are those who tell us that the party offended being infinite, the offence and its consequences must be so too: but we do not find the same

rule hold good in offences against our fellow-creatures upon earth, or that the continuance of the delinquent's suffering should be proportioned to the length of life of the party injured. In setting fines for misdemeanors, the Court measures them by the circumstances of the offender; nor will the rule of law, salvo continemento suo, ever permit such to be imposed as must prove his utter ruin: and if an insult be greater when offered to a king than to a cobbler, it is because the public are more concerned in one case than the other. Besides that, strictly speaking, there is no offending against God, for we are incapable of doing damage to him, and without damage and a tendency thereto there is no wrong doing; for an action that can do hurt to nobody, nor leads into other actions that might be hurtful, cannot be evil: but the damage is done or endangered to the creatures, and God for their sakes exacts the punishment for reparation, or prevention of the mischief.

For he is all goodness and mercy, never terminating his views upon evil: as I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he should turn from his evil ways and live. Therefore, when he punishes for the evil ways, he does it not in anger, but in loving-kindness, either to the delinquent, or to other creatures in whose interests those of the sufferer are involved, in order to procure some good to both, greater than the suffering sustained: but endless suffering leaves no room for good to redound therefrom. We cannot certainly tell in what manner the sufferings of one creature operate to the benefit of another, but it seems to be by serving as an overbalance against the temptations urging to the like offence as drew them on, and we may be sure will be adequate to that purpose: but it does not from thence appear necessary, they must be infinite either in weight or duration.

And for the depravity of our nature, acknowledged to subject us to the actual wickedness we daily commit, we were made human creatures either by an immediate creation just before our birth, or by some law of Providence introducing us into these corporeal organizations we inhabit: and the same Power which for wise and gracious purposes has placed us here, is able to place us in a more favourable situation, where we may have strength of will to pursue invariably such portion of understanding as he shall please to allot us. Nor since universal Nature, with all her courses and minutest motions, were planned out by the Almighty, can we deny that this improvement of our condition may be effected by stated laws of his establishment; neither that the same laws may have furnished us with the natural forces to work out that little pittance of righteousness it was his design we should attain in this life, without the supernatural assistance of his Holy Spirit; of which, though we have many pretences, we have no certain or rational evidences among us, other than what are drawn from the sacred records.

Therefore I must rank the Redemption with all belonging to it, the Incarnation, the Intercession, effusions of the Holy Ghost, eternity and extremity of punishment, among those additions in the republication of the law of Nature which were not contained in the first edition; as being never discoverable by human reason, nor could ever have been known otherwise than from Revelation, and those miraculous events that were the testimonials of it: so I must deliver over my Catechumen to the divines, to whose province it belongs to lay before him the positive proofs of a Revelation having been actually given, and of the truths recorded in sacred story:

having first prepared him for their reception, by showing their credibility, and that they may be understood in a sense which carries no repugnance to human reason.

I would desire him to consider further, whether upon the foregoing representation it does not appear, that Christianity contains all that rectitude of sentiment and conduct, which it is the use and aim of the best Philosophy to lead men into; and then let him reflect, whether he can find examples in history of any system of Philosophy having answered its end so effectually among mankind: from whence he may discern it to be a beneficial thing, even before he sees it proved a true one. Some few sages of uncommon capacity and uninterrupted leisure, have run extraordinary lengths of knowledge and virtue, and spread them among their followers of the like contemplative turn: but who of them ever framed a system of general or national use, which could rouse the thoughtless, warm the phlegmatic, restrain the impetuous, discipline the unruly, bring the vulgar, the simple, the giddy, and the busy, to think of the things above, to look for an inheritance in a better country, and make preparation for the future health and vigour of their spiritual body?

As to us who were born in a Christian country, and had our education formed upon that plan, if we fancy ourselves able to do everything by our own skill and prowess, still it would become us to reflect from what sources this sufficiency was derived. Were Christianity to be universally discredited and exploded, perhaps my own morality and tenor of conduct would remain the same it is: but had that been exploded before I was born, I am far from thinking I should ever have attained the little judgment and philosophy for which I now am thankful. For that importance of right opinion and practice, inculcated into me by the nurse and the priest, first made me a Search, and put me upon exerting my faculties with caution and industry in the discovery of some things they could not teach me.

Therefore, to use a homely saying, we have reason to speak well of the bridge we have gone over: and it would be an unpardonable selfishness, if because we think ourselves safely landed upon firm ground, we should carelessly suffer the bridge to be broken down in prejudice of other passengers, who may be as little able as ourselves to stem the torrent of youthful passions and fashionable follies, or wade through the mud of indolence, with the slender staff of unripened reason. Having examined some of the principal arches of the bridge supporting the doctrinal part, I proceed next to the practical, composed of three principal compartments: for as the whole of moral philosophy has been usually divided into the cardinal Virtues, so all the duties of the Gospel are comprehended under the theological Virtues, styled Faith, Hope, and Charity.

CHAP. XV.

FAITH.

Descend, celestial Graces, sacred Triad, steadfast Faith, all-soothing Hope, and serenity-smiling Charity. Your passage now lies easy, since when the gates lift up their heads, the everlasting doors of heaven were opened, and the King of Glory came down to succour lost mankind. He came in three distinguished characters: the Father awakening our slothful

faculties, by signs and wonders; the Son opening a way to happiness, by setting a perfect pattern of endurance and forbearance; and the Holy Ghost invigorating our endeavours, by his imperceptible assistance, to copy the great example.

The almighty Agent, in this triple character, has rescued us from the thraldom of our nature, evidenced by Adam's transgression; he has led captivity captive, and given gifts to men; he has subdued all our enemies under us: the last enemy subdued was Death, that king of terrors, whose grim aspect used to embitter all the joys of life. But now, O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; but you, angelic sisters, brightest among the train of the King of Glory, when he passed the everlasting gates, choicest among the gifts he gave to men, shall shield us from the point of that sting.

You bear the panoply of God, proof against all assaults: for whomsoever you should fit therewith completely, he need not fear the approach of moral evil, nor pressure of what natural evil Providence shall judge needful for him to bear. It is by your enlivening energy alone, that we can become new creatures, that our affections can be raised from grovelling in the mire of sordid appetite, our understandings enlightened to discern the things above, our hearts united in perfect harmony to pursue one common interest as members of the same body, our views enlarged to regard ourselves as citizens of the universe, our mortal made to put on immortality, and our clay-built tabernacles sublimed into fit tabernacles of the Holy Ghost, wherein we have promise that the Father and the Redeemer will come unto us, and make their abode with us.

Draw near, ethereal Virtues, shed your benign influence upon me, purge my mental eye, dispel the mists of prejudice and error; that I may behold distinctly your shapes and features, and faithfully describe them to such as will lend an attentive ear. Nor disdain to approach for that I have brought a train of earth-born goddesses to receive you, natives of philosophic land, daughters of human Reason: for he too claims his descent from heaven, and bears the candle of the Lord, in testimony of his divine original. His fairest daughters these, the Virtues styled Cardinal, heretofore esteemed four, but in my searches by the light of nature appearing five. Is it presumption that I attempt to join heaven and earth in amicable concord? for both were works of one Almighty power, both correspondent parts of the same all-comprehensive plan.

Behold the celestial Graces condescend to take hands with those of mortal growth! Behold how aptly they associate in the mingled dance! how firmly Prudence treads upon the solid ground that Faith has marked! Prudence, whose features, divided among the other sisters, make them all seem but her under various forms; and Faith, on whose strong shoulders the two other Graces lean. Fortitude and Temperance follow most steadily, where led by sure and certain Hope. Justice never quits the train of unreserved Charity, and Benevolence is her very likeness, as much as mortal production can approach divine.

But first, thee, Faith, introductress of thy companions, thee first let me survey: thy strong knit muscles, capable of removing mountains, thy hardy constitution, unhurt by toils and labours, unappalled by dangers, unvanquished by the fiery trial. In thy mirror thou exhibitest the perfect image of things invisible to mortal ken; with thy telescope thou bringest remotest objects near the eye. Thou evidence of things not seen, thou present sense of distant joys, and earnest of happiness kept in store for thy

followers. Thou takest thy seat upon a rock; the solid ground of rational piety is the ground thou lovest to walk upon; honest Inquiry and sober Freedom are the pioneers to plain the way before thee; experience and contemplation of the Attributes the pavement whereon thou canst most securely tread.

The airy fabric of superstition and unthinking zeal will not support thy weight: there wanders there a phantom, awkward mimic of thy port and likeness, followed by a fallacious Hope and narrow-minded Charity: the hollow figure bears the semblance of thy vigour and robust complexion, but contains no nerves nor solid substance. She feeds on dreams and fairy tales, old legends, juggling tricks, and such fantastic food: she talks in an imperious tone and confident air, but fails in time of trial: she stands ever at variance with Reason, whose piercing eye and potent grasp are her greatest dread; so she hoodwinks her zealots, that they may never meet his glance, and terrifies them with menaces, that they may fly from his approach.

This the dim-sighted Free-thinker mistakes for thee, whom he charges with her absurdities and follies: so he draws his keen-edged weapon, ridicule, lays manfully about him, and thinks to make a merit with Reason, by an aid that does him no real service: for he is too eager of victory to distinguish friend from foe, or examine calmly what it is that he attacks.

But let us proceed with better care and circumspection, observe attentively thy countenance and make, the construction of thy frame, the texture of thy joints, and ground thou standest upon, that we may neither draw thee disfigured by any foreign mixtures, nor give them an undeserved credit by being introduced as parts of thy composition.

2. In the current notion of Faith, it is apprehended to be an assent of the mind to some proposition, or a conviction of its truth: which whoever admits is deemed to have the virtue of Faith, and whoever denies is condemned as an infidel. The zealots of all sorts understand it so, which makes them value themselves upon their orthodoxy, and think hardly of every one who does not admit the distinguishing tenets of their particular religion or sect. The Free-thinker understands it so too, and therefore will not allow commendation due to anybody for his opinions: nor could we find fault with his inference, if his premises were right. For against the merit of faith, in this idea of it there lies a very just objection, namely, that it is no virtue at all: for virtue must be an act of our own, the work of our own industry, and consequence of our volition; but assent is involuntary, it is an act of the understanding, not of the will, wherein the mind is purely passive, receiving such judgments as the objects exhibited cast upon her. For you cannot help seeing that two and two make four, nor can you assent to their making five by any power you possess; neither if you want clearness of thought to follow Euclid in all the process of a theorem, can you assent to the demonstration, how justly soever it be carried on.

Therefore, if two heathens of equal capacity, but different ways of thinking, had the same arguments laid before them proving Jesus to be the Christ; should one stand convinced and the other not, the former might be the more fortunate, but not the more virtuous man upon that account. This I think can hardly be denied by anybody, supposing both to come with the same honest desire of learning the truth, to consider the evidences produced fairly and impartially, and to have no wilful prejudice or passion casting their weights into the scale. But this is not always the case: what then if our unconverted heathen failed of conviction, because he shut his

eyes against the evidences proposed, so that they could not work their due effect upon his judgment, was he not blameable? Certainly, to a high degree; but his fault was of another kind than want of faith; it was want of sincerity, want of a proper regard to his reason and interests: for there are varieties of faults, and a man may be charged unjustly with one, though he were really guilty of another. There are some able and industrious workmen, a little too fond of liquor; if one of these intoxicates himself so as to become incapable of finishing the day's work he has to do, he deserves your censure for intemperance, but not for idleness; for no man can be counted idle because he omits to do what he was not capable of doing. So when a man shuts his eyes against the truth, the blame lay in shutting his eyes, not in that he did not see when they were shut, for this it was impossible for him to do; and the fault was owing to a wrong turn of mind previous to the failure of conviction you complain of.

On the other hand, the commendation belonging to him that was convinced, was due to his behaviour preparatory to the conviction, while he was yet as much an infidel as his partner; therefore his honest attention, which is all you have to praise him for, could not be deemed an exercise of the virtue of faith, but of some other virtue. And I believe it may be safely laid down in general, that conviction of a truth unacknowledged before never is itself an act of virtue, though it may be the reward and fruits of some virtue the man had before conviction. Hence it appears the essence of faith does not consist in assent to certain truths proposed, nor in easiness of conviction, upon good and solid reasons: I grant that where good and solid reasons will not move, it indicates something vicious in the character; but then it is a vice of another species than infidelity: wherefore we must seek elsewhere than in conviction for the proper bottom whereon to place the essence of faith.

3. We have taken notice upon several occasions, that man is not entirely a rational, but a sensitivo-rational animal, guided by understanding and imagination jointly; and in CHAP. XII. XIII. of the first volume, have endeavoured to ascertain the distinction between those two faculties. His motions for the most part are actuated, and his purposes executed by appetite, desire, moral sense, habit, persuasion, and all the family of imagination; the office of understanding lies only in recommending the purposes, and even in the choice of them it must proceed upon motives and principles suggested by the other faculty. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to have a well-disciplined imagination, habituated to run in the tracks that reason has pointed out: for reason is a slow mover, not quick enough to keep our active powers in play, nor vigorous enough to surmount any obstacle, until use and expertness have made the practice easy.

Hence it is that the dictates of reason have so little effect upon our conduct, unless some appetite or desire can be brought to co-operate with them; and the virtues do not receive their essence completely, until they are grown into appetites. Let a glutton be ever so well convinced of the desirableness of temperance, and resolve upon the practice, he will keep his resolution no longer than while he can hold the good consequences of temperance in contemplation, and behold them with more satisfaction than the present gratification of his vicious appetite: in which case it is not temperance he desires, but its benefits; for the ultimate point in view is always to be deemed our motive of action, not any intermediate steps discerned necessary to attain it. But all this while he has not the virtue of temperance, he has only what the ancients called the inchoation of virtue, wherein she is in her embryo

not yet completely herself, nor fully formed. When by frequent contemplation of the consequences, satisfaction becomes transferred from the end to the means, so that desire can fasten upon acts of temperance immediately on being presented to the thought, then it is he begins to have the virtue of temperance.

For it is of the very essence of virtue, that she have force enough to draw us to the pursuit of her for her own sake: whatever other considerations first made her amiable, they must be dropped out of sight, before she can arrive at her full stature; for while they remain in view, the acts we perform may be interest, may be prudence, or piety, or acts of some other virtue, but not exercises of that particular virtue whereto they seem to belong.

But in all appetite or desire, of which every genuine well-formed virtue is a species, there is an assent or persuasion of the mind that the action suggested will prove satisfactory in the performance; and this persuasion rises instantly upon thought of the action, without thought of anything further to recommend it: so that in every desire there is a persuasion, not always worked by reason, but discerned intuitively by sense and apprehension, and the strength and efficacy of the desire depends upon the degree of persuasion: which gave occasion for some to lay down, that happiness is made by opinion. But there are some assents, which though not immediately raising desire, yet are of necessary use to direct us where to place and how to attain it: for a competent stock of useful knowledge is as requisite to our well-being as a useful turn of inclination; but this knowledge, to be serviceable, must be so strongly imprinted in the imagination as to appear in its full colours upon inspection, otherwise it will rest in empty speculation, having no influence upon our conduct.

In CHAP. XIII. above referred to, I have distinguished between conviction and persuasion: the first is worked by arguments evincing a truth, and while we have those arguments ready in mind, we may satisfy ourselves of the truth at any time by contemplating them; but the recollecting them is a work of some time and reflection, nor can be performed always whenever we may want the truth for our direction. But by frequently holding the evidences in view, assent will at length become transferred from the premises to the conclusion, as well as desire from the end to the means: from thenceforward conviction grows into persuasion, and the truth becomes a judgment of the mind discerned by sense and apprehension, not a deduction of reason, and operates as a principle of action. Thus both assent and desire may, by care and diligence, be brought to fix upon objects without the intervention of anything else to connect them; and as when desire has been thus habituated to prompt to laudable actions without view of the profits recommending them, this constitutes the essence of a virtue; so when assent has been inured to rise spontaneously upon the idea of certain useful and practical truths, though unaccompanied by the evidences enforcing them, this bears the same characteristic, and as well merits the title of a virtue as the other.

4. Persuasions of the imagination commonly accompany the convictions of understanding so long as the evidences working them can be retained in their full colours, but not always: for where there was any prior persuasion contrary to them, it will struggle a long while before it will give way to the strongest conviction. Hence comes the so usual expression, I could scarce believe my own eyes, when people see anything discordant from their former ideas; and we often find a difficulty in persuading ourselves of a matter, after having seen convincing proofs that it must be true. We all now agree [redacted]e Sun stands still, and the Earth moves round him in her annual or-

bit; yet we cannot imagine the quiet bed we repose on to run hundreds of miles in a minute. Arguments have been produced to prove irrefragably that the compactest bodies upon earth contain more of pore than solid substance; yet our ordinary persuasions concerning wood, and stone, and glass, and other hard bodies, represent them to us as perfect solids: and the very epithet applied to the motion of light, which we call an incredible velocity, shows that imagination cannot always follow the fullest conviction of reason.

But in many cases, those too of no small importance, although persuasion does accompany conviction while reason can hold up the necessary lights, it will not stay a moment after they are withdrawn. When retired to our closets we give full and fair scope to reflection, we can satisfy ourselves of many truths that would be of excellent service to us for directing our conduct; but when we enter into action, at which time their influence is most wanted, we find the persuasion of them gone; not perhaps that they are lost out of our memory, but appear there as speculative fancies, without any solid foundation, nor can we always recall them again in their full colours, even in our hours of leisure.

How many people, thoroughly convinced of there being no reality in ghosts and apparitions, yet cannot lay aside their fears in the dark? but fear implies a persuasion of something mischievous really at hand. How many people carry away a persuasion from sermons or good books which they cannot retain in vigour to the next day? Tully tells us that while he had Plato's Dialogues before him, he was always assuredly persuaded of the immortality of the soul; but when he laid his book aside, doubts began to arise, and his persuasion dwindled away by degrees into nothing. We hear continually from the pulpit, that though there are few speculative atheists now in the world, there are multitudes of practical atheists; that is, persons who have not God in their thoughts, unless when you put them in mind, for then they will readily and sincerely acknowledge his Being, his Power, his Holiness, and his Justice. These people do not want arguments to convince their understanding: they want only to have their conviction take such strong hold on their imagination, as that the impulse of sensitive objects may not loosen nor perpetually drive it out of sight. And it is a common complaint that men do not live up to what they know: we all live up to our persuasions, but they do not always follow our knowledge. For our present judgments successively shape every turn in the windings of our conduct, but they continually fluctuate or vary in form and colour; nor can those which were the result of our clearest knowledge maintain a steady seat in the mind, without being displaced or changed by others, thrown in mechanically, from external objects, former habits, example, or company.

Therefore faith is an habitual uninterrupted persuasion of truths that have been manifested such to our understanding: as superstition may be defined a retaining persuasions after reason has plainly shown them erroneous. Hence comes the distinction so frequently insisted on in Scripture between a dead and a lively faith: the former is but a nominal faith or theory, the latter alone a real one and a virtue. For when an important article is become a judgment of the mind, appearing there as a self-evident truth, rising spontaneously, with a strong unreserved assent, without waiting for reflection to evince it; then, and not till then, it will operate as a practical principle of action, and have its weight in determining our minutest motions; but nothing that is not practical can be useful or a virtue, nor placed to the credit side of our account.

5. But though faith be generated by conviction, and then not so much by strength of the evidences contributing towards it, as by the reiterated contemplation of them in our thoughts, it is often produced by other causes. It is well known, the continual chimings of a sect or party among whom a man is constantly conversant, will insensibly draw him into their notions, without aid of any argument or application to his reason. For example and sympathy have a surprising effect upon the imagination, and evil communications will inevitably corrupt good principles, as well as good manners. Education, too, authority, and custom furnish us with many of our persuasions, which we take currently upon the credit of others, who have delivered them to us with confidence as certain truths.

Nor do mechanical causes prove insufficient to affect the state of our opinions; strong liquors will raise hopes and give a man a confidence in his powers, he never could have attained by sober reason: diseases, those especially of the bilious and phlegmatic kind, render us unable to entertain a thought of the best attested pleasurable truths. I do not know whether I shall be counted whimsical, but I cannot help owning, I find in myself that indigestion, east winds, or an air disposed to thunder, make a considerable alteration of colour in the articles of my creed; nor can I then behold some of the most important truths of Religion, nor grounds of trusting in the divine Providence, nor duties of humanity and benevolence, with the same vigour of assent as at other times, when the machine is in perfect order. For crudities in the juices will often quench the Spirit by chilling and stagnating the blood; and I have experienced more than once that a sip of Daffy's elixir in the morning rising has proved a powerful means of Grace, dispelling doubts and despondencies, restoring Faith to its former strength and brightness. Hence those weakly pious people who disturb themselves for that they cannot raise a fervent glow of faith whenever they please, may learn that this is impracticable, as depending upon causes not under their command: therefore the gloom arising therefrom being not imputable to them, they ought to rest contented with their situation, expecting a better opportunity to improve their faith at seasons when their bodily humours and all external circumstances shall be more favourable. They may laudably do what they can to help themselves, but for that purpose might better have recourse to their horse or their apothecary, than to their gospel-minister: for air, exercise, proper regimen of diet, and aperients may relieve them; but upon these occasions, pathetic lectures, long prayers, and incessant hymn-singings will be more likely to prove quenchers than quickeners of the Spirit, to stupefy than enliven their faith.

But though these impediments last mentioned are temporary, and only suspend but do not destroy our habitual persuasions, our faith being not dead but asleep in the interval; yet I apprehend our natural temperament, education, and company, give a permanent turn to our opinions. From hence it follows, that our faith, as well as our other virtues, are in a great measure given us without our own endeavours to co-operate in the acquisition, being wholly derived from sources turned upon us by Providence. Many people are made equitable and benevolent, industrious and temperate, by the examples and instructions laid before them: and many entertain just and sound notions upon the most important subjects inculcated into them by others, without ever having discovered the truth of them by their own observation.

Nevertheless, these habits, both of desire and persuasion, are valuable possessions, however obtained; wherefore it behoves us to spread them

among our neighbours as far as we are able, by rational conviction if we can; if we cannot, then by authority, by exhortation, by example, by sympathy, by the passions, or whatever other method shall be found most feasible: and to improve those we have ourselves from whatever sources our good fortune has thrown them upon us; adding to them such others as we find wanting in our character, by careful and assiduous exercises of our reason, and by the practice of forms, ceremonies, customs, and institutions suitable to the purpose. For imagination is a faculty we possess in common with the brutes, and like them must be disciplined with management and artifice; which then is honest artifice, when directed by an honest design and to a laudable purpose.

But the grand strengthener of faith and every other virtue is a behaviour conformable thereto; for nothing like practice to rivet any principle of action in our minds. A man may improve his courage more by one campaign than by any lectures he can receive upon fortitude, and confirm himself in his Religion by some difficult obedience to its dictates better than by all the arguments or meditations in the world. For my part, I place little dependence upon my moral speculations, while remaining in speculation alone, how carefully soever I have endeavoured to connect them: but if something occurs in real life wherein I can exemplify them in my conduct, I find it gives them an additional weight in my judgment, though without one additional reason to those whereon I had founded them. Nor do the effects of practice terminate in the particular principle prompting thereto, but extend to all others connected therewith: it is this makes faith grow like a grain of mustard seed, and shoot out all its branches until it becomes a tree spreading over the whole character and conduct: and by this may be explained that text which says, To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

6. We have seen that faith is an habitual persuasion, therefore persuasion is the genius whereof faith is the species: for it is obvious there are multitudes of persuasions which do not deserve that appellation. Not but that we often apply it in common discourse to any favourite persuasion, as when we say, that such an one has great faith in Ward's pill, or James' powder, or Berkley's tar water, for curing all distempers; or in changes of the weather-glass, or squallings of peacocks for prognosticating the weather: but here the word is used figuratively, for nobody imagines these things to rank among the virtues. It remains then to inquire by what characteristic to distinguish this particular kind of persuasion we have been speaking of. Now to make a persuasion faith, I conceive it must be of some important proposition, it must relate to some matter of Religion, it must be strong, and it must have a rational foundation.

Let a man believe ever so firmly that all diseases proceed from swarms of imperceptible animals breeding within us, this, though grounded on ever so good reasons, is only a speculative opinion, it cannot be faith for want of importance; for it will make no difference in his manner of treating diseases or regulating his own diet and regimen. If he believes constant exercise, or physic, every spring and fall, necessary, it may be of great importance to his health: yet these are not faith, because matters of common prudence, not of Religion or duty.

If he believe the practice of religious and moral duties his truest interest, so far as to give a ready sincere assent whenever put in mind of it; but it lies so light upon his thoughts as never to occur spontaneously without being suggested by somebody else, or if it rises in such faint colours as

to be eclipsed by every dazzle of worldly profit or sensual appetite; he may have a nominal, but has not a real or lively faith, which can be of any avail to him, or influence his actions: for it is the spontaneity and vividness of faith that give it life, activity, and efficacy, and constitute it a virtue. But habit contributes more to nourish up this vigour and argument: it is the office of reason to direct us what we are to believe, but when we know this, the business is not half done, for frequent contemplation, proper discipline, and other means of faith must give us that full and habitual persuasion wherein the virtue consists.

And experience sufficiently testifies what mighty force there is in an inveterate persuasion: the invincible constancy of the primitive Christians, the slavish drudgeries of the Papists, the tedious attendances and self-denials of the Methodists, the whimsical austerities of the Indian Foughars, show to what incredible lengths a strongly impressed notion will carry men; and make us sensible of how vast importance it is, to turn this powerful engine of human nature into right and salutary courses. Therefore we may easily imagine that Faith, when grown to full maturity of strength, may remove mountains of vice and indolence, subdue the strongest appetites, undergo the most grievous labours, face the most formidable dangers, and pass unhurt through the severest fiery trials; nor can any thing else assist us effectually upon such difficult occasions.

For we may observe that all those instances of persuasion above specified were generated, except the first, and that perhaps was greatly aided, not by application to the understanding but imagination, not to the head but to the heart, by example, by custom, by censure, by applause, by positive assertion, by continual harpings upon the same string, by working upon the passions: and these engines might as effectually be employed to good purposes as perverted to bad ones, were but men of parts as industrious in studying the science of honest artifice as of selfish craft and cunning. The chief use of popular discourses upon topics of Religion and morality I take to be, not so much to instruct, as to warm, to encourage, to inculcate persuasion: for a man may be taught what he ought to do with much less time and trouble, than what he has learned can be nourished up into a vigorous principle of action.

7. I have laid down as one ingredient in the essence of faith, that it ought to have a rational foundation, nevertheless I do not apprehend it always necessary that foundation should be first laid in the reason of the party believing: for this would be impracticable, because the superstructure is often wanted for use, where there is not this ground in being whereon to rest it. The necessary process of education shows, that you must begin with inculcating persuasions before there is any compass of reason affording an opening to build upon: and many grown persons, either through the narrowness of their capacity, or avocations of their profession, never can be fully instructed in the reasons whereon you support the truths it is highly requisite for them to be persuaded of. Therefore it is in vain to think of doing everything by rational conviction, nor need one scruple to instil right and wholesome persuasion by such other methods as appear likely to succeed.

Nevertheless, I would have as much use made of reason as it would yield, nor advise any man to raise persuasions in another whereof he does not see grounds himself to think they will prove salutary to the receiver, nor to omit making those grounds visible to his understanding, so far as it can bear. For we ought to consider ourselves as public persons, our various

talents given us for the general service; and since some want strength and opportunity to reason for themselves, those who have the faculty clearest ought to employ it honestly and sedulously for the benefit of others in whom it falls deficient; so that no persuasions may prevail, which were not originally introduced by the rational conviction of somebody or other. And with respect to those persuasions we find already engrafted in ourselves, before we first arrived at a competent use of our reason, it will become us to examine them carefully thereby, and trace them down to their solid foundations, that so we may be able to give a reason for the faith that is in us; for this will eable us to make a more judicious application of them to our conduct, to settle the precedence among them where they seem to interfere, and prevent their running into extravagancies, headlong zeal, or righteousness overmuch.

Besides, we may sometimes find cause to eradicate such of them as stood upon hollow ground; for persuasions inculcated by education or infused by custom, having been transmitted through many hands, may receive a little change in every step of their passage; so that by the aggregate of these changes, it is possible that from solid and salutary they were at first, they may come in time to be trivial or pernicious: nor are there not some among them which were calculated upon the characters and circumstances of times, which being different now, though they might be highly expedient two hundred years ago, they may become useless incumbrances upon us at present.

But though I would exhort every man to build as much as he can upon reason, let it be remembered, when he does build for himself, it must be upon his own reason, for he cannot see with another's eyes: he may indeed, and often ought, to trust another for what he does not see himself, but then he may judge of the other's veracity, and probability of the truth recommended. It cannot be expected that every man should be a philosopher, a theologian, or a metaphysician: but if he cannot choose his doctrines for himself, he may choose his teachers, and observe something in their conduct and manner of proceeding that shall give him a little insight into their character. God has given him some share of discretion, and expects he should improve it to help himself therewith: nor need he lie under anxiety for the event, for one of the most wholesome persuasions is that of a perfect trust in the dispensations of Providence. The size of his talent was of divine appointment, and God knows what portion of understanding was proper for him, and how to produce good out of his weakness: therefore let him use the best judgment he has, and if he fall into mistake, it will be a happy mistake, provided it be involuntary, and not owing to his own mismanagement, or negligence.

8. When I require that faith should have a foundation in reason, it might seem to follow that this foundation must lie upon the ground of truth: but this is not to be understood so strictly, as that a man may not in any minute instance connive at the reception of an article he does not believe himself. It will be urged that sound reason must always stand upon truth, and so indeed it does ultimately, but not always without the intervention of something else as a cushion between: schoolmen allow, and divines sometimes employ what they call arguments to the man, when they use such as they think will weigh with the hearer, although having no credit with themselves; but then the conclusion they would prove to him thereby, ought to be a real truth in their own judgment, or they act dishonestly. In like manner, if you would bring a man into a persuasion you judge in

your own mind to be just and beneficial to him, you may lawfully put in use other persuasions leading thereinto which you do not hold yourself, provided you cannot effect your honest purpose upon him by rational conviction; for in this case the end sanctifies the means. For we have seen in the course of these inquiries, that use and expedience is the proper end whereto all our proceedings are to be directed: both opinions and practices are best when they tend to generate a happy temper of mind, and make us industrious in promoting happiness as well in ourselves as in others. Therefore when we have settled what persuasions conduce most effectually to this desirable purpose, we may laudably enforce them by such methods as we find feasible, if those are not feasible which we would choose.

It cannot be denied an article of the utmost importance, that our thoughts and words and actions here will affect our condition hereafter, and to insure the belief of this, it is vulgarly supposed that books are kept in heaven, wherein are exactly minuted down all the transactions that pass upon earth. Now let some refined speculatist be scandalized at the thought of angels writing with pen and ink in books, or the need of a formal trial and judgment, imagining the same purpose may be answered as well by an apt connection of causes with effects established at the beginning among the laws of nature, he will never be able to make his connection intelligible to the vulgar: therefore if he deprives them of their books and their after-reckoning, he will leave them no persuasion at all to hinder them from indulging their own follies and vices, without fear of any damage to ensue therefrom.

Another very material article of faith is the government of Providence over all sublunary affairs, as well moral as natural, ordinarily imagined to be administered by perpetual interpositions among the motions of matter, instinct of animals, and actions of men, made either by immediate exertions of Omnipotence, or operation of invisible spirits peculiarly commissioned thereto. But if any man, wiser than ordinary, shall fancy it contrary to reason that superior orders of being should be employed in our little concerns, or that the wheels of Providence should be so unskilfully put together as to need continual rectifying every day by the hand of the artist, yet why should he disturb mankind in their conceptions, without which they cannot comprehend how the errors of chance and mischiefs of human perverseness can be prevented, or any government of the world carried on?

The divine residence somewhere above the clouds, the far-stretching eye of Providence piercing through the thickest walls, and roofs, and coverings, into the secret chambers of darkness, the peculiar presence of God in places set apart to his worship, and that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them, may be thought matters of scoffing by some who cannot believe the Deity local, nor that he has any remote objects to behold, any coverings to pierce through, as being omnipresent, alike existent, intelligent, and observant, in every minutest portion of infinite space; nevertheless, it will be prudent to keep their scoffings to themselves, lest if they overthrow the popular notions, they may overthrow therewith all sense of the Divine Majesty, all expedience of being circumspect in their most private thoughts and actions, and that reverence in their devotions which may beget an habitual disposition of mind, tending to regulate their behaviour in the world.

In these cases, it is not worth while to contend with an adversary for the truth, or the tenets currently received; for supposing them errors, yet when an innocent error lies so closely connected in the minds of men with

an important truth, as that both must stand or fall together, it is against the interest of truth to eradicate it; for, as in pursuit of pleasure, so of truth, the greater income upon the whole is to be regarded. Therefore your men of pleasure, as they affect to call themselves, very ill deserve the title; for they grasp at every present indulgence greedily, but thereby bring on more grievous displeasures afterwards: in like manner, your indiscreet sticklers for truth prove in reality its greatest enemies; they take vast pains to cure some little harmless mistake, and by so doing often lead into other fatal mistakes they were not aware of.

It is fixing the eye upon opinions singly, without reference to their connections and consequences, that misleads both the bigot and free-thinker: the latter finds something he thinks will not bear a scrutiny, as having no ground of reason to grow upon, so he sets all his wits to work to pull it up by the roots, without minding what other useful plants are intermatted therewith, which of course will follow upon plucking this away: the other pitching upon some favourite tenet without ever examining whether it be directly serviceable of itself or only by its necessary relation to other serviceable persuasions, lays out his whole attention upon that, and pursues it to an extravagance incompatible with the very relation which alone made it recommendable. Whereas, if we would give all our opinions and all our duties their due share of our regard, we might find them in time consolidate into one regular system, wherein there would be no breaks nor inconsistencies, nor detached parcels, but they would model one another into shape and symmetry; and by discerning their several uses and mutual dependencies, we should understand them more perfectly, apply them more judiciously to our practice, and know better how to deal with other persons, according to their respective needs and dispositions.

9. Hence it appears very material for him that would build a rational system of faith, compact and solid in all its parts, to observe what persuasions are immediately serviceable in themselves, and from thence to consider, what others are necessary or expedient to protect and nourish the former.

Persuasions are serviceable, either when they tend to satisfy the mind with respect to our situation among things external, and to the rectitude and success of our actions; or when they direct to measures which will yield good fruits of happiness at some future time. The mind may be satisfied, and the will prompted to useful measures, by fallacious persuasions, which will operate as effectually as the best grounded until the fallacy is discovered: a man receiving a bag of counters, may be as well pleased therewith as if they were real gold, nor does his satisfaction abate until he finds upon trial they will not pass current in the market; and if he have extraordinary talents, he may employ them indefatigably in public services, while he can persuade himself there is an unparalleled happiness in having his fame continue many years after his decease.

Perhaps it might be found upon examination, that much of our pleasure and self-confidence arises, and much of the business of life is carried on, by means of fallacious persuasions, or if they be just, they are so by chance, being not chosen upon discernment of their proper grounds, but taken up from custom and fashion, fallen into by habit, or generated by vanity, prejudice, and self-love. This consideration makes little for the credit of human nature, governed in great measure by a kind of instinct, like the brutes, led thereby to provide against wants they have no knowledge of; but it may serve to heighten our idea of Providence, which can execute the

purposes of wisdom by our follies, ignorance, and errors, and draw us to work out a real good we think nothing of, by pursuing a fantastic good that is such only in appearance and imagination.

Nevertheless, though Providence knows how to bring good out of evil, we do not: therefore it is our duty to take such measures of which there is a reasonable prospect to our own judgment, that they will bear valuable fruits. Fallacious persuasions may and do often satisfy the mind for the present, but as often disturb it, and at best must some time or other end in disappointment: and if they prompt to useful performances, it is always with a mixture of inconvenience, which might have been avoided had the same been undertaken upon good and solid motives. Wherefore it behoves us to form our opinions by the best exercises of our reason, upon such materials as we find afforded us from our own experience or elsewhere, to examine which of them will yield the greatest profit, and sedulously to cultivate those until they become habitual persuasions, rising in their full strength and colour whenever suggested to the thought, and to spread them as extensively as we can among mankind.

10. To enumerate all the variety of persuasions which can soothe for the present or urge to some profitable action, would be endless and impracticable; but they may be ranged under a few general heads, of which those tending to immediate satisfaction of mind are three: when we have a good opinion of our condition, which generates Content; when we have a prospect that things will happen well with us by-and-by, which is Hope; and when we confide in the rectitude of the conduct we are pursuing, which makes Self-approbation. Persuasions of the useful kind are of two sorts: those which give us full assurance that distant enjoyments will be present, and as delightful as those in hand, or that every right action will be attended with some desirable success, which give life and vigour to the virtue of Prudence, and those which make us regard the good of others as our own, whereon depends the virtue of Benevolence.

Health, vigorous desires, and plenty of materials to gratify them, give men a good opinion of their condition, which is usually heightened by comparison: for they please themselves more for possessing what others want, than for the intrinsic value of what they possess; and to make the claim of peculiar advantage the more general, they severally undervalue and despise whatever does not suit with their own taste, regarding the rest of mankind, who follow different pursuits, as unhappy deluded creatures, but themselves as the prime favourites of fortune. Nor were the Stoics wholly mistaken when they placed happiness in opinion, for much of our satisfaction springs from that source.

Perhaps the only advantage of riches, honours, power, bodily strength, beauty, learning, quickness of parts, may lie in their being generally reputed advantages: for those who want them, and have been habituated to live without them, have their other enjoyments as copiously as those who abound in them, with this only difference, that the latter possess what they esteem an advantage, and this opinion is all that can give it any pretence to be a real one. When the mind is satisfied with her situation, she seldom forebodes mischief for the future; but our views are generally very short, and the future we concern ourselves with extends not to such a length as that we cannot easily flatter ourselves that our present supplies of enjoyment will hold out. Having this scanty prospect before us, we place rectitude of action in making provision for the gratification lying within its compass: our vanity and self-confidence confirms us in the propriety of our conduct, and

we are angry at every one who should presume to censure or question us upon it. Thus in this land of peace and plenty, we have most of us the three persuasions requisite for present satisfaction: unless when some cross accident, or turbulent passion, or imaginary want comes athwart the way to disturb our repose.

It may be thought trifling, that among the sentiments worthy our endeavour to inculcate, I recommend the persuasion of distant enjoyments becoming present, and being as much enjoyments, when they come, as those we have now in hand: for who ever doubts of this? or hesitates a moment to acknowledge, that to-morrow in some hours will be to-day, and that a diversion we shall partake of to-morrow may prove as entertaining as one we are at this instant engaged in. I know very well we are all sufficiently convinced, that the most distant futurity will one day become present, and when present, whatever satisfaction or uneasiness it brings, will affect us as strongly as those we now feel; but it must be remembered that we are speaking of persuasions, not of convictions, and the difference between the two is nowhere more remarkable, than upon the article of futurity. While we can hold up the lights of our understanding, we see clearly that remote good is alike valuable with the present: but it is the hardest thing in the world to fix an apprehension of this truth in lively colours upon our imagination.

The judgments of the mind correspond in strength and colour with that of the objects whereon they are passed; but the further objects are removed, they grow more faint and indistinct, and of course our opinions concerning them will be less vivid and clear. Both pleasures and pains at a distance appear scarce worth our regarding, or giving ourselves any trouble about them: let a man make trial, and he will find it impracticable, with all his efforts, to raise an apprehension of the desirableness of an enjoyment to come seven years hence, equal with one near at hand. For the present occupies our thoughts, and forcibly carries away the preference in our imagination from the future, against the clearest and surest decisions of our understanding. This imperfection of our nature deserves our utmost application to rectify, by gradually inuring the mental eye to discern objects distinctly at a distance; and it is the quickness of this moral sense, or habitual full persuasion of certain good and evil, however remote, being alike valuable with the present, that constitutes the virtue of Prudence.

But the glass of passion will give a lively tint and magnitude to distant objects, when the eye of reason cannot: ambition, avarice, authority, example, and custom, set a value upon acquisitions that take up a whole life in making; and vanity persuades us it is a desirable thing to have our names well spoken of a hundred years after we are dead and gone. These sources then furnish us in some measure with useful persuasions to carry on the business of life, and spur us up to as much industry in providing for the future as we do exert, serving as succedaneums to supply the place of that prudence wherein we fall deficient. And the like springs derived from education, custom, fashion, and fear of censure, move us to the exercises of benevolence, instead of the mutual connection of interests between man and man, which is its most solid bottom; but of which we seldom have an infinite persuasion, though we sometimes make profession of it in our mouths, and perhaps sincerely, as fancying that we have it, when in reality we have nothing more than the shame of being without it.

11. But these sources of satisfactory and useful persuasions spoken of

in the last section, do not flow upon all; nor are secure of being continued to any, as depending upon external and accidental causes: health, success, the materials of gratification, may be taken from us, or when not utterly lost, are often withholden for a time; the solace found in comparison will be frequently wrested out of our hands, notwithstanding our utmost partiality upon seeing others possessed of advantages we cannot but acknowledge superior to our own; disappointment, danger, and distress, will destroy our sanguine expectations of the future, and the mischiefs we run ourselves into by inconsiderateness will discover a faultiness in our conduct, that with all our self-conceit we cannot varnish over. Passion, custom, fear of censure, prove but ill succedaneums to prudence and benevolence, doing their work imperfectly and injudiciously when set right, and often taking a wrong bias, urge us to act imprudently and selfishly.

Therefore these transient persuasions, springing from short views and narrow prospects, afford a very precarious benefit: to make them certainly and durably serviceable, they ought to be gathered from the most enlarged compass whereto the eye of understanding can stretch, so as to discern objects with an affecting clearness. Whoever is fully persuaded that the lot of his existence, so far as lies distinctly within his ken, contains a much greater proportion of enjoyment than uneasiness, must in general be content with his present condition, and augurate well for the future; and in seasons of trouble, his hope, if lively, will hold content from flying away; casting a gleam upon the darkness overwhelming him, from the many bright spots in prospect before him. An entire confidence in the efficacy of reason to procure happiness, in opposition to the inferior faculties, will give it an influence upon the actions, and raise a constant self-approbation in all that is done in pursuance of its dictates, even though they should sometimes lead into involuntary mistakes. The habit of seeking satisfaction in the prospects before him, and of confiding in the usefulness of his understanding, will create a sensibility and desire of distant good sufficient to carry him through all prudential measures; and the opinion that whatever good he does to others redounds sooner or later to his own advantage, will continually nourish in him a disposition to universal benevolence.

But though such persuasions may be received upon credit or catched by sympathy from others, they must have been first embraced upon some intrinsic recommendation of their own; which must come from their agreeableness either to our inclination or our reason. There is a wonderful propensity in mankind to believe whatever they wish to be true, and this may incline them to think well of their present situation, of the prospects before them, and of the justifiableness of their actions, without other ground than because the opinion is soothing to their thoughts. And it is so visibly the interest of every man to have other persons kindly disposed towards him, that we all join in crying up benevolence until we persuade ourselves it is a real good to the party possessing it, without clearly discerning the way by which it operates to his benefit.

But those persuasions, cast upon us as it were mechanically, by inclination or custom, are liable to be wrested from us by pain, vexation, or distemperature of the bodily humours, throwing a melancholy gloom upon the mind, or by the company of persons of contrary sentiments: nor can be depended upon as secure and durable, unless fortified by other persuasions, built upon calm and solid reason, whereof inclination, prejudice, and interest had no share in the superstructure. Which persuasions must be drawn from Religion, because nothing else can afford a compass of ground large

enough for the foundation that will be wanted; and what are so drawn I apprehend may properly be denominated Articles of Faith.

12. It cannot be denied that there are articles of natural as well as revealed Religion, nor that if they could be completely drawn out and heartily embraced, they will produce a happy and useful temper of mind, answering all the purposes we could wish for from them. For I suppose if Adam had continued steadfast in his innocence, he would have wanted no knowledge of whatever made for his good; nor yet would he have known anything of those promises, which were given for restoration of his lapsed race. But in the present darkened state of his descendants, we have no certain rule whereby to settle and distinguish the necessary articles: every one is left to his own judgment, and those who have exercised it most carefully, have varied greatly from one another in their determinations. In this uncertain situation of things, I may be excused in offering my sentiments, taken, as may be expected, from the foregoing parts of this work: which I shall not attempt to impose as dictates of authority, but suggest only to the consideration of each person who may think it worth while, either to receive or amend them, according as shall be found most reasonable and convenient for his use.

The corner-stone of Faith must be laid in the belief of one God, and the attributes of Omnipotence, Omniscience, infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Equity: upon this bottom, well grounded, will stand firmly the dominion of Providence, by the appointment or permission whereof all events come to pass without exception throughout the universe, ordering all things for the best; but then by this best must be understood, not what appears so to our desires or judgment, but what is best in the eye of unerring Wisdom for the creation in general. But since many dispensations of Providence tend to the detriment of human life, we can have no interest in the good fruits of them, if our existence terminates with our life: therefore the next point to be inculcated is the unperishableness of our nature; that we shall for ever retain the capacity of enjoyment and suffering, and that our sensibility will be at least as great when separated from the body, as in it.

Having fixed this article upon our minds, it will be necessary to impress the persuasion of distant enjoyments, whereof we have an assured expectation, being as valuable as those near at hand: and upon this article there needs no argument to convince us, that a thousand years hence will in due time be present, as surely as the next hour; the difficulty lies in turning this conviction into a strong and lively apprehension, equally vivid with that worked by the evidence of the senses; without which all our other persuasions will avail little either to satisfy the mind, or to carry us on in the prosecution of our most important interests. If we could completely attain such quick sensibility of the future, we should never want a counterpoise to balance the weight of any present evil that might befall us: for we should always have an exhilarating prospect in view, being assured, from the divine dominion and goodness, that there must be abundantly more good than evil in nature; and since goodness cannot terminate its views upon evil, therefore the very evils we lie under must be sent for some greater good to redound therefrom to the creation. But the divine Equity, inferring an equality of enjoyment and burden among the creatures, insures to us our share of the profit arising from every trouble, and of all the good befalling everywhere.

It is this connects the universe into one society of coparceners: brings

the interest of others home to ourselves; overthrows all pretence to privilege and pre-eminence, renders it indifferent to whose profit we apply our endeavours, whether to our own or our fellow-creatures, provided we turn them where they may yield the greatest advantage; and makes us desirous and delighted to see happiness wherever it can be found, as giving us a better opinion of the lot of existence whereof we partake. But though the lot of existence be equal upon the whole balance of some immense period, too long for us to measure by the line of our comprehension, yet the several stages of it are unequal: this we know by undoubted experience to be the case of human life, nor does there want reason to expect much greater inequalities, and of far longer duration, in the stage of being we have next to pass through; wherein it appears, upon contemplation of divine Justice, that our condition will depend upon our behaviour here, this life being preparatory to the next.

The consideration that all creatures and all forms of being lie under the dominion of one Governor, may convince us that the several laws respecting them were formed upon one all-comprehensive plan: therefore the municipal laws in each district were calculated for the good of the whole, and by promoting the advantage of our fellow-travellers in the stage wherein we are placed, we shall take the surest method of procuring advantage to every other stage we have yet to pass through. So that though the happiness of the next life be the principal and ultimate aim of our pursuit, yet the general good of mankind in this world, and of ourselves as members of the species, is our immediate aim and proper direction to attain the other: this then we ought constantly to pursue by such rules of Religion, morality, and prudence, contributing thereto, as we find established upon the best foundations.

Our understanding being the faculty that God has given us for the guidance of our conduct, we may rest satisfied that he has proportioned his gift to the purposes he intended should be served by it: therefore we may confide in the directions of this guide, being assured that, while we follow them, we pursue our own truest advantage. For though our guide will sometimes lead us into errors and inconveniencies, yet sooner or later we shall find it was better upon the whole that we have taken his admonitions, than if we had acted contrary to them: and this persuasion will give us a serenity and self-approbation in the rectitude of our measures, whether successful or not, whenever conscious of having taken them upon the best of our honest judgment, in preference to the solicitations of appetite, or passion, or interest, or other motive whatsoever. If our abilities to do service be small, or our opportunities scarce, if we find our reason at any time dark and uncertain, or that we cannot rise to those heights of virtue we wish and endeavour, this need not disturb us: for God distributes his gifts to every man in wisdom and goodness, and though understanding and virtue be among the choicest of his gifts, wherefore we ought to improve them to the utmost, yet still they are gifts; which should make us satisfied with the portion allotted us, without repining at what is denied: for we have always some choice in our actions, and strength to perform something of what we discern; if we can do nothing else, we may solace ourselves with the reflection of having made some use of the glimpses of light and pittance of vigour afforded us, which will encourage us to make a further use of them, as often as occasion shall offer.

13. These articles of faith strongly riveted in the mind, so as to become habitual prevailing persuasions, must, I conceive, nourish and strengthen those satisfactory and useful sentiments spoken of in § 11, whereon depend

content, hope, self-approbation, prudence, and benevolence; which, in a close-thinking person, can hardly stand secure and stable without them. For to such an one, the bare sanction of authority or general reception will not always suffice; the notion of opinions and practices good in themselves without reference to use, will often prove a hollow foundation, nor can such reference be carried along upon solid ground without just and rational ideas of the supreme Being; from whose character alone we can gather anything with assurance concerning things unseen, or the relation our present state and transactions bear thereto. Therefore they appear to me fundamentals of natural Religion: but as the pious and judicious Chillingworth has observed, fundamentals are not universal; the same tenets being such to one man which are not so to another, according to their respective apprehension of things, and model of their understanding.

Therefore if any man finds another theory of universal Nature, its laws and relations, different in any particulars from that above sketched out, more satisfactory to his reason, more effectually to insure him a steady peace of mind in all situations, to carry him through any difficulty, danger, or self-denial, in pursuit of a greater remote good, and enable him to forego any present pleasure or private advantage for the certain profit of the public; let him regard it in the list of fundamentals to him: only let him not rest in the conviction of his understanding, but by frequent meditation and other methods he shall judge expedient, work it into an habitual sentiment that may rise spontaneously upon occasion, and make his theory practical, so as to have an influence upon his ordinary thoughts and motives.

14. But there is no good thing which has not its imperfections and its opposite evils, which are as pernicious as the good are salutary, and therefore ought industriously to be guarded against. I have laid down that a persuasion, to be faith, must be right, and it must be strong: it is not right when it leads to sentiments contrary to those before specified as satisfactory and useful, and then may be called a heresy or anti-fundamental; and I think it is the truest test of heresy to examine whether it must naturally tend to make us dissatisfied with ourselves, careless of our real interest, and regardless of one another. If we could settle the list of fundamentals, whatever opinion opposite thereto catches strong hold on the judgment, so as to be regarded as a certain truth, must be counted heretical: but though it may be difficult to ascertain everything precisely that is so, yet in some particulars one can hardly be mistaken.

When we entertain narrow notions of Nature or of the Deity, ascribing an original power to Chance and Necessity, or imagining God partial, vindictive, arbitrary, having an interest to serve upon us for the advancement of his glory, straitened in his good purposes by an uncontrollable nature of things, or scattering his blessings sparingly to a few only out of innumerable multitudes: this will unavoidably fill us with fears and suspicions of mischief to come, doubts and distrusts concerning the rectitude of our measures.

The doctrine we are too commonly bred up in and find generally established among mankind, that happiness lies in the indulgence of present desires, confines our views to the ground just before us, and effectually destroys that faith in the desirableness of remote advantages, which is the vital blood and sinews of prudence. You shall hear people value themselves upon their voluptuousness, their idleness, their exquisite taste of pleasures, their aversion to labour and self denial of every kind; and what

was originally an appetite shared in common with the brutes, becomes a deliberate choice of the judgment, a settled scheme of conduct, a ruling principle of action.

Nor does vanity fail of producing many heretical sentiments: children are brought up from their infancy in a high conceit of themselves, their condition and endowments; they despise everything around them as trivial, sordid, and wretched; they think merit and the title to happiness peculiarly their own. This must give them an unfavourable idea of nature, wherein they can see so very little worth the having: if things happen cross with them, they murmur against Providence, of whose goodness they can form no conception unless in an uninterrupted partiality to themselves; and begin to fear the world is not administered justly, because things unpleasing are permitted to fall upon such precious creatures. They are incapable of a sentiment of benevolence, as deeming none worthy regard except their own sweet persons, and some few favourites ministering to their pleasures, or resembling themselves. Their habit of drawing everything to their own centre makes them look upon all labour as lost that is laid out in the service of another, as hearty good-will cannot well subsist with contempt, they can bear none to mankind in general, whom they utterly despise, as having nothing suitable to their own taste and customs: the dirty peasant is below their notice, because he has not the dress and breeding of a gentleman; the Chinese and Tartar is not worth a thought of what becomes of them, because they know none of the English modes; the Negro may be treated like a beast, because he is black and blubber-lipped; and the beasts may be abused, mangled, and tortured, for convenience, pleasure, or fancy, with as little scruple as we saw the trees into boards, because they cannot expostulate with us, nor retaliate.

15. The imperfection of faith is not owing to its erroneousness, but its faintness: many people have their understandings set rightly enough, and assent to the most important truths sincerely, without hesitation; but their assent is like the sight of objects through a mist, and leaves a secret suspicion and mistrust that perhaps they may not be true, though without any apparent reason to doubt of their truth. This, as we have observed before, is only a dead or nominal, not a real or lively faith; and is so far from removing mountains, that it cannot remove a mole-hill, nor overcome the slightest obstacle of appetite, terror, or indolence.

Several causes contribute to prevent persuasions from growing to their full strength; our hastiness to take them up on trust in veneration of authority or compliance with custom, before we have well digested them, or examined the weight of the authority, or sources of the custom, or endeavoured to support them by foundations from our own fund. The fallibility of human reason, which makes us loath to hazard anything upon its clearest decisions, unless confirmed by actual expedience; the necessary attendance to the common business of life, and expedience of taking care first of the concerns nearest at hand, which perpetually draw off our thoughts from remote objects and extensive scenes.

Besides this, our articles sometimes seem to clash: the due regard to our own interests obliges us to cross, to disappoint, to contend with other persons, even to punish and put them to hard service, and to forbear some things tending to the public weal; wherein Prudence appears to stand at variance with Benevolence. The absolute dominion of Providence, ordering all things for the best, may seem to supersede the use of our own deliberation and industry; the ultimate equality of all may give us an apprehension

that our success upon the whole will be the same, whether we behave well or ill: as on the other hand, the constant experience in this world, and rational expectations of the next, that the conditions of men depend upon their own management, may tend in our judgment to overthrow the doctrines of Providence and Equality.

While our opinions thus interfere, they must necessarily weaken and discredit one another, keep us wavering between two, uncertain whether of them to prefer: in which case some appetite or secret inclination generally steps in to cast the balance, and the suspicion of this makes us perpetually mistrustful of our conduct. Wherefore, to obviate such inconveniences, it will be expedient frequently to compare our sentiments together, to work them into one regular body, having no discordance among the parts, but rather mutually depending upon each other. For which purpose it may be helpful to recollect what has been offered respectively upon those seemingly clashing tenets in the former parts of this work; wherein endeavours have been used to reconcile them in perfect harmony together: to show that they tend jointly to one end, the advancement of happiness, and stand upon one bottom, experience of human and external nature, together with the observations and reasonings clearly flowing therefrom.

16. But these reasonings proceed by steps from one discovery to another, and the justness of each subsequent deduction depends upon that of the preceding: hence it happens that there are always some intermediate speculative opinions, which, though yielding no direct profit themselves, yet serve to support and corroborate our fundamentals. For upon contemplation of them, our articles of faith will become convictions of reason: but conviction is the best and surest basis whereon to erect persuasion, and by being frequently run over in the thoughts, will establish it most strongly. Such of these speculative opinions then as are the premises necessary to work conviction of an article, we may style secondary or relative fundamentals, as having a near connection with the essential; and deserve to be well examined first, and then thoroughly fixed in the mind, that they may occur readily upon occasion, without doubt or distrust of their truth.

I have been careful all along in the course of these inquiries, to seek for what might redound to good profit; and how much soever I may be thought to have dealt in curious speculations, am not conscious of having pursued any that appeared mere empty curiosities, or improper for remote foundations whereon to build useful and salutary doctrines. Among these secondary fundamentals I reckon on the individuality of the human mind or person: the faculties of perception and volition being primary properties of the individual, the nonentity of chance, the certainty of free actions, the dependence of freewill upon motives, and those upon antecedent causes, the right exercise of our freedom being the channel whereby good is conveyed to us, the doctrine of universal Providence, the derivation of virtue from the provisions of Heaven, through the channel of human volition, the Attribute of Equity, the foundation of Justice upon expedience, the spiritual body surviving the carnal, and rendering us capable of preparation for the next life, because there can be no preparation nor alteration in an individual: the conformity of municipal laws respecting mankind with the universal respecting created beings in general, whereby the former become our direction how to conduct ourselves agreeably to the latter.

These points appear to me clearly deducible from the knowledge we may gain by experience, and are the pillars without which I could not support the more important articles before specified, nor give them a solid consistence

in my understanding: therefore must look upon them as deserving to be thoroughly considered and firmly fixed in mind among the necessary Credenda of philosophic Faith. But since the understandings of men are variously constituted, whoever can satisfy himself in his fundamentals upon other principles, may regard those I have laid down as mere speculations, for I did not propose them for any intrinsic value they might be supposed to contain, but only for the salutary persuasions following from them: therefore they become fundamentals or not, according to the consequences they will naturally produce in the minds of particular persons. For use and happiness are the sole points ultimately to be considered, and whatever theory tends most effectually to secure a constant serenity of mind and steady industry in the prosecution of our own interest and the good of others, is the most valuable, and most carefully to be cultivated.

Nevertheless, there is this defect in all philosophic Credenda, that they cannot obtain a general reception even among the thoughtful, but each man has his own set peculiar to himself, which must greatly retard and weaken their effect. For Imagination, which we have shown to be the seat of faith, the clearest convictions of understanding not deserving that name until they have made a firm lodgement there, is a sensitive faculty: it will not follow the surest guidance of reason without assistance of some mechanical operation. Wherefore twenty men may easier persuade one another into anything by the mechanical workings of sympathy, that is, by continually chiming together in the same notion, than one man can establish it firmly in himself by the force of his understanding, among nineteen dissentients.

Since then imagination so hardly follows understanding when most vigorous, what can we expect it to do in the bulk of mankind, who want leisure and opportunity for improving their faculties to full maturity? They must necessarily take up their opinions upon trust, but not knowing whom to trust, would have no opinions at all, nor other guidance than their own accidental fancies. Were men of thought unanimous in one scheme of natural Religion, they might easily draw the rest of the world after them; and were that scheme a good one, it might perhaps answer all the purposes wanted from it; but this is not likely to happen in our days, nor the days of our children, or children's children. Why then should we not rather choose to effect the same purposes by the opinions publicly established among us, which are so easily applicable thereto, and which Divine Providence appears to have directed, by having given them so general admission? only taking care to prevent their being turned by perverse misrepresentations, as too frequently has been done, to opposite purposes.

17. Men in general, as I observed just now, take up their opinions upon trust, either from the authority of persons they revere, or example of persons among whom they continually converse; and are more confident in the certainty of what they take this way, than any philosopher in the discoveries of his science; yet they will be more secure to continue firm and unshaken if enabled to give a reason for the faith that is in them. But the reasons to work effectually upon them must be such as will tally with the model of their understanding, to which the nice investigations of nature can scarce be rendered intelligible, nor the fine lines of connection running among them discernible; they can much easier apprehend the evidences of facts, and be made sensible of the conclusions resulting therefrom.

The belief of miracles, signs, and wonders, having been actually worked by almighty Power, of remote events having been foretold, immediate revelations vouchsafed to particular persons, of God having united himself to

one man so as that all the acts and words of that man were the acts and words of God, and this done in transcendent mercy for restoring the human race from a state of misery to a state of happiness, his having declared life and immortality open to all, and risen from the dead as an earnest of our resurrection, the promise of divine assistance to co-operate with our endeavours, the persuasion of our minds sometimes actually feeling the effect of such assistance, the strong injunctions to resist all inordinate passion and appetite, and allurement of present pleasure, to bear an universal good-will to our fellow-creatures; to expect ample reward for every conquest over ourselves, and every good office performed to one another, to do all things for the glory of God, and the placing that glory in a lively sense of his Omnipotence, his never sleeping Providence, his mercy, his loving-kindness, his righteousness and holiness, ordering all his dispensations for our good, so that no evil shall befall us but he will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it: the firm belief of these points must, in the dullest apprehensions, beget a persuasion instigating to the practice of prudence and benevolence, and render such practice a perpetual source of content, and hope, and self-satisfaction.

The authority of the Scriptures, dictated by the unerring wisdom of God, shorten the way to useful knowledge within a length that the weakest faculties can hold out; and prove a readier, plainer guide in matters of doctrine or duty, than the best enlightened human reason pursuing its course by long intricate deductions of one consequence from another: so that whereas it was a common saying among the philosophers, that truth lies hidden at the bottom of the well; the firmly-rooted Christian may say, that all necessary truths are raised up to the surface by the written word, where they stand apparent in such legible characters as that he who runs may read.

18. It does not fall within my province to examine the evidences whereon the authority of Scripture is founded, nor truth of the facts, and peculiar doctrines recorded there; this is the proper business of divines, to whom I shall leave it: I mean no more than to attempt a rational explanation of what has been there inculcated concerning the necessity and efficacy of faith, by help of the principles already maintained in this Chapter; agreeably to my general purpose of working a reconcilement between Reason and Revelation in those points wherein they have been set at widest variance by unbelievers. In order whereto it will be expedient to touch upon that controversy formerly much agitated among Christians, relating to the preference between Faith and Works, whether of the two operates immediately to our benefit, or is recommendable only for the sake of the other. Which nevertheless I take to be a needless, unprofitable question: for since faith and works must constantly go together, it is not at all material which of them is the valuable possession, because whoever has them both may be sure of having the right; and whoever falls deficient in one deceives himself if he thinks he has the other.

Yet how unavailing soever the determination of this point may be for common use in the conduct of life, I apprehend it may throw some light upon the subject of our present inquiry. If then by Benefit be meant such as we can receive upon earth, I must clearly give the preference to works: for the benefit redounding to me from another, depends upon the greatness of the services he does me, not at all upon his intention, or persuasion of its being a duty; and his intention is no otherwise valuable to me than as it prompts him to do the services, which, provided they be effectually done, it

is all one whether they were done out of good-will, or vanity, or self-interest, or through mistake.

It is commonly said that a man had better have a knave for his steward than a fool; because the one will only cheat you himself, but the other will suffer everybody else to cheat you. And the case is the same with respect to a man's management of his own interests in the world, which he will pursue more successfully by having large abilities, than a right disposition of mind.

But with respect to our interests in futurity, which are incomparably more valuable, the case is widely different; for though it be said our works follow us, it is the remembrance of them only that follows, to be an evidence of the disposition and tenor of mind producing them; for the works themselves can yield nothing advantageous to our condition then, nor furnish materials we shall be capable of enjoying. Whether or no I can improve my own or my neighbour's health, or fortune, or reputation, or learning, or pleasures, it will be all one to both a hundred years hence; any further than as the making such improvements are exercises of my own virtues, or give him larger opportunities for the exercises of his. Therefore in estimating the goodness of actions, the motive and temper of mind wherewith they were performed, where it can be certainly known, is the sole thing to be considered: no matter whether the good done be great or small, if the benevolence were hearty and strong, the deed is of equal value to the performer.

We know, the widow who cast in her two mites, which make a farthing, to charitable uses, was declared to have given more than the rich men who threw in their talents, that is, more productive of good effects in the next world, though certainly less beneficial to the poor receiving it in this; and that greater profit arose wholly from her greater zeal, which prompted her to part with all that she had beyond that of the rich men who gave of their abundance: and had the widow, as she was going along to the treasury, found a purse of gold, though she might have done more good therewith than she could with her farthing, she would not have been the better woman, nor have found anything in the purse to add a grain to the piety and charity she brought with her from home.

The only true estate forever we can purchase by our care and diligence, lies in the sentiments of the heart, for the virtues as well as all other desires depend upon our persuasions: we desire things according to the ideas of them in our imagination; not indeed always according to the conviction of our reason, for this does not always beget an apprehension in the internal sense equal to itself, but whatever we strongly apprehend will be good and satisfactory in the possession, never fails to excite our desire: so that such as our habitual persuasions are, such will be our prevailing desires, and such our ordinary tenor of conduct. Hence it appears that Faith, taken in its utmost extent, including every salutary persuasion, is the only possession primarily valuable; and good works depending in great measure upon opportunities and external causes, can no otherwise be placed to the credit of our account than as they manifest it, and as the practice of them contributes most of anything to invigorate and increase it.

19. If it be asked in what manner faith will operate to our future benefit, the pious Christian has a ready answer, that it is by engaging the bountiful favour of God towards us: for having promised that whoever believeth shall be saved, he will reward all such as have obeyed his voice and trusted in his word, giving them eternal life and unspeakable happiness, by his own

immediate act and almighty Power. But since this answer may not satisfy some, who fancy that God does nothing unless by the instrumentality of second causes, and by certain stated laws of nature, I shall endeavour to show a probability, that he has actually made such provision of causes, in the constitution of the human frame, as that our persuasions here naturally affect our condition hereafter.

It is generally holden upon the best authorities, as well of reason as religion, and has been confirmed by several observations in former chapters, that this life is a preparation for the next: now one cannot well imagine a preparation made, unless by some alteration or better disposition of parts; but what change or new disposition of parts can take place in an individual which has no parts? From whence it seems necessarily to follow, that the human soul, when departed from the body, remains still a compound, consisting of an individual spirit, vitally united to some material system, serving it for organs of perception and instruments of action, as our limbs and bodily senses serve us upon earth; and in this system the preparation is made, by disposing it for better performing the functions that will be wanted from it hereafter. For being, while enclosed in the body, the inner chamber we inhabit, and medium whereby we receive all our sensations from external objects, or reflections occurring from our imagination, and beginning the motions propagated onward to our limbs, or bringing up ideas before us in voluntary reflection, it must be effected by whatever passes with us here. Transient sensations and motions may be supposed to affect it for the moment only of their action; but habitual persuasions, casting up their ideas constantly in the same train, are likely to work a durable effect, disposing the fibres, shaping the limbs, and determining the powers of the spiritual body: so that it will go out differently formed and capacitated according to the mould wherein it has lain, and according to the impressions received from the thoughts, and words, and deeds flowing from good or evil habits. And this way it may be easily understood, how we may lay up treasures in heaven by means of a strong and lively faith, exemplified in the steady practice of all good works we have ability and opportunity to perform.

20. For though we have seen that great works are of none avail in themselves to our future benefit, yet are they the proper test whereby to try the genuineness of our faith: for all persuasions are not faith; some of them are merely speculative, and indifferent, others are pernicious, and destructive of our future interests. But we can make no anatomical or physical discoveries of the spiritual body, to instruct us how it lies enclosed in the corporeal machine, with what nerves it connects, what trains of thought or action of the animal spirits will contribute to give it health and vigour, or to enfeeble and disorder it: nor can we come at any serviceable knowledge concerning it, unless from the same ground whereon we may judge of all other things unknown and unseen; I mean the idea of that Power who is the maker and disposer of things visible and invisible, and has disposed them both upon one plan, so as to make the former our direction for the measures relative to the latter.

From hence we may rationally conclude, that whatever persuasions best promote the happiness of human life, introducing a constant serenity of mind and steady industry in the prosecution of our own and each other's interests, will prove the most salutary and nourishing to the spiritual body, or little fœtus forming and fashioning within us. Therefore just and lively sentiments of God, of his Attributes, his Providence, and administration of

both worlds, adapting the laws of each to the uses of the other, may be deemed the fundamental of natural Religion, and the true saving Faith.

If we have recourse to the Scriptures, we shall find there the faith in Christ declared to be a fundamental without which no man can be saved; and certainly what God has declared necessary must be acknowledged so without dispute; for even supposing faith to operate by natural means, he best knows the constitution of the spiritual body, and what will prove advantageous to it: therefore none who believes the Scriptures to be the word of God, can doubt of this being a fundamental. But we have seen towards the close of our Chapter upon the Trinity, that fundamentals are of two sorts; those essentially, such as operating directly to our benefit, and those derivatively fundamentals, because necessary to support the former, and deriving their value from the others which they support: the question then is, whether faith in Christ and his peculiar doctrines be a fundamental of the first, or of the second sort.

If we observe the general tenor of the Scriptures, without laying too much stress upon single detached texts, we shall find them recommend a sober, righteous, and godly life, doing the Will of God, and reposing a full trust in the wisdom and goodness of his dispensations, otherwise called Coming to the Father, as requisites necessary to Salvation. But we can come to the Father, during our continuance upon earth, none otherwise than by entertaining just and worthy sentiments of him, which if strong, and habitually inculcated upon our minds, cannot fail of producing a good life, inclining us steadfastly to do his Will, and inspiring a confidence in his protection and government. Thus we see that coming to the Father stands as a fundamental upon the authority both of reason and Scripture, nor have we ground in either to imagine, that it is not the sole essentially fundamental, completely operating to salvation: for I do not recollect it is anywhere expressed in the Scriptures, that any man who cometh to the Father, by what way soever he arrives, shall be rejected by him.

But they declare, that faith in Christ is the only way by which we can arrive thither: therefore coming to the Son becomes a necessary fundamental, because it is the sole passage leading into that which was originally so.

21. There are people who conceit themselves, that they can come to the Father without passing through the Son: if they can, I shall not scruple to pronounce them in a state of salvation; but whether they can or no belongs not to us to determine, for who art thou that judgest another's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Our Christian charity, which we are told is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, but believeth all things, hopeth all things, and thinketh no evil, should incline us to judge favourably of our fellow-servants. And that we may not want foundation so to do, let us remember, that access to the Father is obtained by gradual approaches, some of which must be previous even to the passage through the Son: for he has told himself, that no man can come to the Son, except the Father draw him. And this matter stands exemplified in Cornelius the centurion, who was accepted of God while yet an unbeliever; and this distant approach he had made under guidance of his natural lights, procuring him an opening into the only way leading to salvation. Nor have we room to doubt that in all ages there have been and still are many Cornelii in the world, alike accepted of God, who therefore will not withhold from them the means necessary for their final happiness; but since he has not

vouchsafed them directions by an Angel, nor provided a Peter at hand to instruct them in his gospel, we may depend upon his having contrived other methods in his laws of nature and courses of Providence, which shall prove as effectual towards putting them into the right way of life and immortality.

I shall not have occasion to repeat what has been urged in the 12th, 13th, and 14th sections of the last Chapter; for if God be good, and would not that any should perish, but that all should attain everlasting life, and if Christ be the only sure and certain way thereto, both which we must believe upon the authority of the gospel, there needs little argumentation to prove, that this will sooner or later be opened to every man; and since there is a degree of approach towards the Father, preparatory to the passage through the Son, we ought to regard those to whom the gospel has never been preached, or who have been unavoidably drawn away by bad education or ill company from listening to it, or to whom the doctrines contained there have been injudiciously represented, so as to make them repugnant to calm and unprejudiced reason, all these we ought to regard as being in the preparatory state of acceptance before God, provided we find they have sincerely endeavoured to approach as near towards him as the natural lights afforded them would serve to direct. And though we must not believe them actually saved, nor yet upon the road to salvation, we may, consistently with our Christian principles, esteem them travellers equipped with all necessary accoutrements for the journey, and ready to set out upon the right road, whenever an opening suitable to their understanding shall be granted.

In the meanwhile it will become us to consider them as persons interested in the same hopes with ourselves, though perhaps at a remoter distance, who will one day become our fellow travellers, members of the same spiritual body; and to forward them in their approaches to the Father, by all kind of good offices and assistance in our power to give, or their capacity to receive; joining with them in such exercises of human reason as will lead into the purest sentiments of natural Religion: for this is an essential part of the revealed: and this way we may be helped to one another, without retarding our progress in any other knowledge it may be expedient for us to attain.

22. But our main concern lies with the rule of our own conduct, not with passing curious judgments upon that of other people: therefore we to whom the truths and doctrines of the gospel have been propounded in a manner satisfactory to our understanding, and who stand convinced upon observation of human nature, that mankind cannot be brought into right sentiments of the Father by philosophical speculations, ought diligently to pursue the road whereinto we have been granted entrance: for whatever ways there may be for other persons, this is our only way whereby we can attain salvation. Nevertheless, we are to remember, this is only the way, not the place of our destination; and he who sticks in the way might as well never have entered upon it.

For faith in the Father would suffice without faith in the Son, were there a possibility of attaining it without; had we not been lapsed creatures, we should have wanted no redemption, and consequently could have known of none to believe in; and since we have promise of the Comforter, who will teach us all things, it is possible he may one day so rectify and strengthen the understandings of mankind, as that the light of their reason alone may lead them into just sentiments of God, without the peculiar doctrines and

instructions of the gospel. But this time, if ever it shall come upon earth, is yet far remote: therefore it behoves us carefully to use the means put into our hands for enlightening the darkness and assisting the weakness of our faculties.

On the other hand, faith in Christ, without coming to the Father, is of none avail to any: the devils believe and tremble, but their faith proves a torment to them, because they have not a right faith in God, as appears manifest from their inveterate malice and indefatigable opposition against the provisions of his government: and Christ himself declares, that if any has so strong faith in him as to prophecy, to cast out devils, to do many mighty works in his name, yet if they be workers of iniquity, which indicates their want of a sound faith in God, he will thrust them from him as aliens and reprobates. From hence we may learn not to place our dependence on orthodoxy, or zeal in defending it, or praying, psalm-singing, reading, meditating, or the punctual performance of religious institutions and ceremonies; all which are of no value otherwise than as a means to strengthen in us proper sentiments of God and his Providence, and these sentiments, if attained, will infallibly show themselves in our practice; therefore in all our religious duties we ought to regard the influence they will have upon our temper of mind and our practice, and may judge of their propriety by the effect we find them take thereupon; for ye shall know men by their works.

Nevertheless, it is not works, but faith that operates to salvation; therefore no man need disturb himself that he cannot rise to those heights of virtue and clearness of understanding, or do so much good, as he wishes; for the disposition and persuasions of the mind are as well evinced in small abilities as in great. A right faith is compatible with the common business and transactions of life: therefore it is a spurious piety, that makes men desirous to lay out their whole time in exercises of devotion. Whoever possesses just notions of God must believe he orders all things in perfect wisdom: since then he in his providence has placed us in a situation that renders an attention necessary to our bodily wants, our worldly concerns, the conveniences and even pleasures of our fellow-creatures, we may show our obedience in performing these little offices with innocence and propriety according to the occasion, as well as the higher duties and acts of Religion. For we are servants whose business it is to fulfil the task before us; we must not expect to be always employed in attendance upon our Master's person, nor ought to esteem any work unprofitable or trifling, which the present circumstances we are placed in require us to execute.

23. From what has been urged in the last section we may observe, that, although faith be the sole principle operating to salvation, yet there may be faith without salvation. The Apostle James asks, If a man say that he has faith, can faith save him? Peter exhorts to add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and so forth: Paul declares that if he had all faith so as to remove mountains, but had not charity, he were nothing: and a greater than them has declared that those who had so great faith as to work miracles in his name, if they were workers of iniquity, shall nevertheless be rejected at the last day. How then shall we reconcile these seeming contradictions, Whosoever believeth shall be saved, and hath eternal life; If a man believe, yet his faith cannot save him, he must add many other things to it, he may still be a very nothing, and rejected at the last day? There must certainly be some variation of sense among the terms employed in these propositions; and it is most likely to be found in that of

the word Faith. There is a lively and a dead faith, a right faith and a wrong faith, or heresy: but this observation will help us little: for it can scarce be suspected that the faith spoken of in the texts alluded to above can be understood of a weak or heretical faith.

Let us then consider that in popular language, that is, in the language of the poor, wherein the gospel was preached, the same words are used not only for things a little different from one another, but often for different extents of the same thing. Thus the word Church stands sometimes for the whole body of Christians, as when we bless ourselves for having been born within the pale of the Church: sometimes for the doctrine and discipline established by law, as when we distinguish between the Church and Dissenters: and sometimes for the Clergy in exclusion of the Laity, as when we talk of the powers or revenues of the Church. In like manner faith is employed frequently to denote the belief of some one particular article, and as frequently the whole system of religious sentiments which every man respectively is capable of attaining: in which latter sense only it deserves the title of a saving faith. For we see that St. Paul, where he speaks of Faith in the restrained sense, calling it a shield, does not think that alone sufficient to enable his Ephesians to stand against the assaults of the devil, but they must put on the girdle, the breast-plate, the cuirass, the helmet, the sword, and all those weapons, offensive and defensive, which jointly compose the panoply or complete armour of God. A deficiency in one material article destroys the essence of a saving faith, which naturally leads men, where they observe such deficiency, to appropriate the name of faith to that particular article; because a right persuasion upon that is the only thing wanting to complete the Panoply. And since all Christian communities have their peculiar distinguishing tenets, such as the bodily presence, the divine institution of Episcopacy, profaneness of forms, ceremonies, or vestments, the belief that Christ died for Me, and the like; they are apt to place orthodoxy solely in them, and lay out their whole zeal upon them in utter neglect of everything else, or rather to the drawing of men's attention from other points, at least equally important, wherein all Christians agree. Whereas orthodoxy lies in rectitude of sentiment upon all branches of our duty, not in the characteristic doctrines of any Church, however infallible: nor does faith, as we have shown before, consist in a bare, however sincere, assent of the understanding, but in a lively, strong, habitual persuasion of the mind. Then let the gifted preacher be pleased to reflect, that it is as much his office to work practical persuasions out of what his audience already know, as to increase their knowledge; to inculcate and draw a profit from those truths they will never hear controverted, as to recover or guard them from errors whereinto they may fall by seduction.

There is still another much more allowable cause for restraining the appellation of faith to a part only of its substance: for since the whole cannot be inculcated at once, but there is some one step introductory to the rest, the teacher, who is to deal with novices, must dwell solely upon that until it be effected. This may serve to explain those texts wherein it is expressly declared, that whosoever believeth in the Son, or believeth that Jesus is the Christ, shall be saved: for this was the one thing needful for the Jew or the Gentile to make him a convert, and bring him within the privilege of the Redemption. We have shown in the last Chapter, that God has marked out to us various lengths of race for each of us to run in this world; and he that runs the length allotted him, be it no more than a single step, is safe;

because more can be expected from no man than was put into his power to perform. But the man who has been bred up from his cradle in the belief of Jesus being the Christ, has no ground to think himself safe with this alone; nor that he has nothing else to do than hunt lectures and sing hymns for impressing this article more strongly upon his mind. The whole tenor of the Scriptures declares that such faith will not suffice for him that has the means of adding to it, for there are other things needful besides: but he must go on to work a lively faith in all the divine truths which Jesus taught, each whereof becomes successively the one thing needful, as he has opportunity offered for acquiring it.

24. One remark more remains to be made for completing the idea of faith: I have styled it a species of persuasion: now persuasion strictly taken is nothing more than a quick apprehension or unreserved assent of the mind to the truth of some proposition; which can never merit the title of a virtue, nor exemplify itself in our conduct, being only a supply of ideal causes directing us how to proceed, but suggesting no final causes or motives urging us to make use of their information. Therefore to make the persuasion beneficial and a virtue, it must carry something desirable in the aspect, which may touch us sensibly on the beholding it. Hence it comes that professions of faith run in a different turn or phrase from the declaration of our opinion concerning common things. A man may express his adherence to the Copernican system sufficiently by saying he believes the Sun stands still, and the Earth and other planets circle round him continually: but it is not enough to prove his orthodoxy to say he believes a God, that Jesus is the Christ; that there is a Holy Ghost: we are taught in our creeds to acknowledge a belief in God the Father almighty, in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, &c. Which particle In, besides a bare assent as to a certain truth, implies a trust or affecting expectation of desirable benefits accruing from God, in his three distinct persons or methods of operation, and from the other articles contained.

I have taken notice, in the Chapter of Honour, that the word Sentiment is sometimes understood of a judgment of the mind upon the truth or falsehood of some proposition, but oftener and more usually of an inward feeling, a moral sense, or appetence towards the thing apprehended. For a sense of honour does not merely bring us to the acknowledgment that such a procedure is laudable, but annexes thereto an admiration, a degree of ardency or hearty wish to follow the like. This I take to be the true import of an inward feeling, whenever receiving a rational construction, which I fear it seldom does in the minds of those who are most fond of having it in their mouths: they seeming most commonly to apprehend it the effect of a supernatural illumination, given rather to enlighten the understanding, than to warm the heart. Such internal sense then, superadded to the sincere acknowledgment of religious truths, is necessary to constitute a virtue, and a perfect faith in God, or Christ, or his doctrines: for no persuasions whatever, unless touching some spring of affection, or introductory of some satisfactory idea complacent to the mind, can either secure peace to our minds, or urge us to the prosecution of our duty towards God, our neighbour, or ourselves.

And I know not whether a feeling concern for distant enjoyments be not the first article and necessary foundation of all faith: for a man who is wholly guided by the present impulses of appetite, cannot reap any benefit from Religion in so short a time as the expiration of a week; not that I deny there is an immediate satisfaction and benefit in the exercise of religious

thoughts and practices, but then it must be to those who have a relish for them, which relish, where wanting, can never be acquired in seven days; therefore he who cares for nothing beyond the pleasures of the current week, how firmly soever he may be persuaded there is a God and a Christ, can never have a faith in either, because he must want that joy in the contemplation of those truths, and value for the remote advantages resulting from them, which are essential ingredients of the virtue. This want I apprehend the cause of that multitude of practical atheists lamented among us, though we have few speculative: for men are well enough persuaded of the consequences of their evil doings; but those consequences being remote, they do not regard them. It is this hardens the highwayman and the street-robber in their wickedness: they expect to be hanged some time or other, and look upon hanging as an evil; they hope however to escape this year at least, so proceed upon the maxim, A short life and a merry one; sing Hang sorrow, cast away care! and fortify themselves with an utter insensibility against whatever may happen a year hence.

It is the sensibility belonging to faith, which brings it to tally with the virtue of prudence: for we have seen in the Chapter upon that article, that moral prudence does not lie in knowledge nor persuasion, for he who knows most is the more imprudent upon that account, if he has not a sensibility stimulating him to make the best use of the lights he possesses. But prudence was always esteemed the root of the other Cardinal virtues, which are several branches growing from the same tree: therefore the name of Wiseman stood for that ideal character supposed to possess them all; for whoever was completely wise, must of consequence be courageous, and temperate, and just, and benevolent. So Faith is the necessary foundation of the two other Theological virtues, which no man can attain without a firm persuasion of the truths whereon they are supported; and whoever has such persuasion, together with an affecting sense of the Divine goodness sending every evil for our good, and the mutual connection of interests, or that Christ will look upon whatever is done to the least of his brethren as done to himself, cannot fail of being inspired with a continual glowing hope and unreserved Charity. From whence we may conclude that Faith often stands as the representative of them, and whenever spoken of as the completely saving principle, it must be understood in that comprehensive sense, including the sister Graces, who cannot walk the rough paths of earth, without leaning on its strong-built shoulders.

25. From all that has been offered in the foregoing pages, may be understood, the reasonableness of the Scripture's ascribing Salvation, Sanctification, and Justification to Faith, and laying down that the just shall live by Faith. Enough has been said already to explain in what manner we are saved by this virtue: whatever works we perform here, being of none other avail to our future interests, than as they manifest and nourish our habitual dispositions of mind.

And if we recollect the description that has been given of Holiness in the Chapter upon that article, it will appear a negative quality, implying an exemption from inordinate passions, wicked and sensual desires; which a just and lively sense of the divine Attributes and government must effectually banish. Wherefore those zealots proceed upon mistaken grounds who place sanctity in continual acts of devotion, and having God always in our thoughts; for it consists in suffering nothing contrary to his laws to intrude there. and

making obedience to his Will the ruling principle of action: nor are the most common transactions of life, provided there be no inordinate indulgence of appetite in them, any interruptions in a holy life.

26. Justification, it has been said, is a term taken from the law-courts; wherein there are but two methods of defence, either to deny the fact, or to justify. If a man be impeached for beating another, he may justify by showing it was done in his own necessary defence: if for false imprisonment, he may justify under the warrant of a lawful magistrate. Thus in all human judicatures, the justification must be taken from some external circumstances which can be proved to the court, because man cannot penetrate into the secret purposes of the heart; but at the bar of conscience, the intention justifies the deed; how unlucky soever the event may fall out, yet if the design were good, and proceeded in to the best of our honest judgment, no blame lies at the door. Therefore it is not the outward acts we perform, but the inward sentiment prompting us to them, that makes our proper justification. From hence we may gather confidence in the rectitude of our conduct when having the testimony of a conscience void of offence: for however ineffectual our endeavours may prove, or the result of them turn out contrary to our wish, however our understanding may be darkened or our imagination over-clouded, yet if conscious that our hearts be set right towards God, we have a solid ground for that self-satisfaction which is one of the five requisites to happiness.

Nevertheless, our uprightness of heart can justify such actions only as it gives birth to: wherefore it is an erroneous and dangerous notion that the Saint can never sin. It is well known in history, that some zealots, in the times of civil and religious confusion, thought so highly of their sanctity as to imagine it justified them in any licentiousness, debauchery, or wickedness they had a mind to; and though these lengths of extravagance are happily ceased, yet are there some among us who presume so far upon their strength and earnestness of persuasion in one or two particular articles of Religion, as to render them careless of their morals or their conduct upon the common occurrences of life and intercourse among mankind; but esteem themselves justified in their censoriousness, peevishness, contempt, and uncharitableness for their fellow-creatures, their indolence and negligence in the duties of their station, or indulgence to certain favourite follies, by the fervency of their faith in seasons of devotion. But each season can only be estimated by what passed in it; winter is never the warmer for the preceding summer having been hot, nor can the sanctity of one deed change the nature of another, which had no sanctity of its own: for our deeds must be tried by the principles from whence they severally issued. A man sued for battery or false imprisonment can never justify by showing, that upon other occasions he was used to behave peaceably and honestly, and has been scrupulously careful to avoid acts of oppression; the only question being what warrant he had for the particular fact whereof he stands charged.

Thus it appears we are not justified by faith in everything we do when not proceeding from that principle, for whatever is not of faith is sin: but it may be said, this idea of justification does not reach the true Scripture sense, for that if it be a law term, it is not a term taken from our Courts, but from the Jewish law, wherein justified stood opposed to condemned, and related to the person rather than the deed; so that a man may be adjudged just and righteous, notwithstanding some human frailties that have led him into actions unwarrantable and manifestly unjust. It remains then to inquire how

faith can justify the person under these circumstances, who must have stood condemned without it.

It is the received opinion, as well among Philosophers as Christians, that physical evil is the certain consequence of moral: therefore no creature can attain a life of happiness without a total exemption from vice, and a complete possession of all the virtues. For he that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole law, that is, liable to the attack of evil, which can only be shut out by an entire obedience or spotless innocence: like a town which is not safe so long as one breach remains open in the wall. As the several virtues bear a near affinity with each other, and none of them can be had in perfection without having them all, it has been usual to take the name of some one among them to stand as a representative of all the rest. The Philosophers have pitched upon Prudence or Wisdom, and the Sacred Writings, except Solomon, who for the most part employs the philosophic term upon Justice or Righteousness, for the general appellation comprehending the whole body of virtue complete in all its parts. Therefore the Stoics insisted that the Wise-man, and he only, was invariably happy: yet at the same time allowed, that this Wise-man was an ideal character, nowhere existing upon earth, but that all the men ever living here were fools, and madmen, and miserable. Nor do I imagine the other sects, though less fond of calling names, could pronounce upon any particular person, that he had a degree of wisdom sufficient to secure him against all attacks of evil. It is not my business to examine how they accounted for this depravity of human nature, nor by what means they expected to be invested with such consummate wisdom in another life, as was necessary to make it a life of unabating happiness: I am only to search out for a rational idea of the Scripture doctrine upon these points.

The Scriptures, as interpreted by Christians in general, declare that man was made upright, until by Adam's transgression he lost his character of uprightness, and fell under the condemnation of being a sinful and miserable creature; which condemnation was not barely of his person, but of his human nature, and extended to all his posterity. For condemnation does not make a man wicked, but finds him so: it relates to the manifestation of a past depravity, till then unknown, for every man has a right to be deemed innocent until the contrary is proved. Therefore the act of disobedience in Adam was not the bane which has worked a distemperature into our constitution, but was itself the trial to show what human nature is, and consequently must avail alike against all who should ever partake of that nature, as well as against Adam. For you cannot deny that act to have been a sin, but it could not be the cause of itself, nor work the distemperature from whence itself proceeded: it was no more than an evidence or judgment of a distemperature lurking in human nature, though you could not discern it before.

Had you seen Adam while in Paradise, you would have judged him possessed of such Wisdom or Righteousness, as must have insured him happiness, till upon finding him foiled by the serpent, you alter your judgment; you now stand convinced he had a mixture of folly and frailty in his composition unobserved before, and condemn him as a weak imperfect creature, unable to resist temptations that will lead into grievous mischiefs. And upon the strength of the same evidence you may pronounce the like sentence of condemnation upon every child newly born, not as guilty of actual sin, nor obnoxious to any punishment due to the offence of

his primogenitor, but as inheriting the like weakness of nature liable to be overcome by the prevalence of appetite, and every art of seduction, so as to be drawn thereby into courses which can end in nothing beside eternal misery. Thus the Scripture concludes all under sin and the spiritual death, from which no man can exempt himself by his natural strength: for in Adam all have sinned, that is, been proved by the bad success of the trial made upon him, to be partakers of a nature incapable of perfect righteousness.

Nevertheless, what was wanting in the original constitution of human nature, God has been graciously pleased to supply by the interposition of his almighty power in the Christian dispensation, uniting himself in his second Person to the man Jesus, enabling him to perform an unsinning obedience, and voluntarily lay down his life upon the cross: who by his example, probably exhibited in the Hades, as well as upon earth, together with the doctrines and institutions delivered by him and influence of his Religion upon the world, will raise human nature some time or other, either in this life or the next, to that perfection which it had not received on its first formation. Thus death came upon all men by Adam, and in Christ all are made alive. But as a turnpike road is made for the convenience of all his Majesty's subjects, yet multitudes of subjects will never travel it; so though Christ lived and died for all, yet all will not reap the benefit of his coming. For he has only prepared the way and provided the aids needful for conducting to the completion of righteousness, but it is by faith that each particular man must enter upon the way.

Till such entry he remains in his natural state of condemnation, but the first step he takes upon the right road, which is done by faith in Christ, justifies him; and if he persevere in his progress by attaining faith in the comprehensive sense described in § 23, so far as his time of life and opportunities will permit, he may be pronounced a just or righteous man, in the same manner as the suckling child is pronounced a sinner; that is, not as possessed of actual righteousnes, but as one who by the means and methods provided in the Christian dispensation, will infallibly be raised to it; for in the estimation of his character he may avail himself of the good improvement expectant therein, to which those means and methods are efficacious. This I take to be the true sense of imputed righteousness, and the application of Christ's merits to ourselves: for nothing passes immediately from him to us, nor does faith transfer a secret virtue or supernatural energy, which the free-thinker would say carried the air of charm and magic, nor operate otherwise than by the effect it must naturally take upon our mind and motions. Neither can any man expect to become completely righteous in this world, but if he be justified or made just, it is only by having a reversion secured to him of righteousness in the world to come. Thus both condemnation and justification neither change nor declare a man's present condition, but that which the circumstances he stands in will unavoidably lead into: and the latter is rather the foundation of a sure and certain hope, than the investiture of an actual possession.

27. Then for what is said, that the just shall live by faith, if it be understood that they shall attain eternal life thereby, this is the same as salvation, of which we have spoken before: if that the tenor of their conduct will be shaped thereby, this follows from the nature of human action, constantly determined by our desires and ideas, which depend upon our habitual persuasions. Therefore those in whose imagination the gratification of appetite and enjoyment of present pleasures appear the most desirable

good, will always act accordingly, making it the business of their lives to hunt after them: whereas such as are intimately possessed with a true and strong faith in God, his providence and constitution of universal nature, will take it for their ruling principle; which of course must render their actions conformable thereto, for the general aim of their desire will lie towards the benefits attainable by such actions. And though it be impracticable to take immediate direction from this principle in every minute instance, yet their other rules of conduct will be branched out from this, and it will lie ever wakeful in their minds to withhold them from following any unwarrantable desire repugnant thereto. So that it may be truly said the just shall live by faith, because it will infallibly produce a life of righteousness, and makes the essential difference between just and unjust.

And though I have all along supposed this to be faith in the Father, yet since no man can come to the Father unless through the Son, the same may with equal justice be affirmed of Faith in him: for if an adherence to the dotrines of the Gospel be the sole necessary means whereby a just sense of God can be effectually introduced, or kept alive and vigorous in the mind, the just may be said to live by faith in Christ, which secures to them that faith whereby they live, with as much propriety as a man is said to live upon his estate, though he does not eat the acres, nor clothe himself with the trees, but because with the rents and profits he purchases the necessaries and accommodations of life.

28. The works attempted to be explained in these three sections are of very little currency among us, and no wonder; for being taken from the Jewish language, there is a great hazard of their being misapplied and misunderstood: but there being still some sets of people very fond of spending their thoughts upon them, I was willing to lend a helping hand towards ascertaining their genuine and rational meaning. Yet since they are now grown obsolete, it were perhaps expedient for the teacher to lay the old language wholly aside, and after examining carefully what was the sense intended originally to be conveyed therein, to deliver it in modern dialect more familiar and intelligible to his hearers: wherein it may possibly amount to no more than that the Christian Religion has rescued human nature from that impotence, and subjection under appetite and passion, which must have proved fatal; and has enabled mankind to attain such regularity of conduct, exemption from the prevalence of sensible objects, and degree of righteousness, as will be the sufficient preparative for a life of perfection and happiness in their next stage of being. But then this must be understood of the human race in general, and implies a connection of interests between the several members, so that the aid imparted to some may, by some means of communication to be carried on in the next world, redound to the benefit of others; because multitudes are born and pass off this earthly stage without ever having an opportunity of reaping any benefit during their abode here.

What has been offered in the preceding sections concerning the essence of faith seems deserving a more accurate consideration, as being founded upon the sensitivo-rational constitution of human nature, containing two faculties, understanding and imagination; the latter the executive power, by whose ministry alone the other can effectuate her resolves: and faith is the habit, setting the impulses of that to their proper direction. This idea will guide us in our judgments of a man's faith, which are commonly taken according to the rectitude or orthodoxy of his tenets: whereas in such esti-

mation it is not so material to inquire what are his particular opinions, as what vigour and steadiness of persuasion he has in the best of those he holds; and if he have some erroneous notions, they may be presumed owing to his want of a full and habitual persuasion in the sound ones, which would have better cleared his optics.

This likewise may lead us into a right interpretation of Religion, by considering its manner of operation, and the uses wherefore it was calculated; which were not so much to inform the understanding, as to supply the place of it where deficient in the vulgar, and discipline imagination to obey the dictates of reason where better informed. Our rational faculty might answer our purposes much better than it does, if it were always properly employed, and had the inferior faculties constantly under command. What we want is, something to direct our thoughts to the most profitable objects, and to impress the result of those thoughts upon the mind and memory, so as afterwards to rise spontaneously, and become a perpetual motive of action. This Religion performs by its authority, its doctrines, its institutions, and its general currency, turning reason into the proper channels of inquiry, and bringing the trains of imagination and springs of affection to take the course our best judgment would recommend. Bare knowledge does not constitute the moral character: he who knows much is a good speculatist, yet may still be the carnal man, actuated most commonly by the present impulse, or toiling in the service of some ruling passion, which happens to predominate in his fancy. But he who has brought his knowledge of what is most beneficial to become an habitual vivid persuasion and ruling principle of conduct, is the spiritual or just man who lives by faith, so far as the imperfection of his present nature will permit.

CHAP. XVI.

HOPE.

The just who live by Faith, shall not want the perpetual Feast of Hope, heart-cheering manna, peculiar food for man: for sensitive pleasure and gratification of appetite he shares in common with the brutes, and tastes perhaps with far inferior relish to theirs. Indulgent Nature, kind to the meanest of her offspring, has prepared sensual delights for them: food, and warmth, and rest, the commerce of the sexes, and wanton gambols on earth, in air, or water, fill up their employment, and make the value of their lives, They enjoy the momentary pleasure as it comes; they move by impulse of objects striking their senses, and follow present instinct even in making provision against future wants, whereof they have no apprehension.

But to man she has given understanding, far-sighted faculty, looking forward perpetually upon good to come, and finding present solace in the prospect. At his first entrance into life he differs little from his brother animals, affected only by sense like them; but the joyful glee of youthful blood quickly subsides; the charm of novelty, that rendered every motion and every scene engaging, flies off; pleasures of sense fall rarely in his way, and his hours would pass irksome, were he not to borrow amusement from those in view before him. The mental eye then opens, to let in joys the senses cannot furnish, the joys of expectation anticipating pleasures yet to come.

But what is that troop of earth-born hopes first glittering in the eye of young imagination, like those lucid vapours that at even over the marsh glide meteorous? Playthings, gewgaws, diversions, the uncontrolled liberty of manhood; followed in riper years by fancied scenes of riches, power, honours, or martial, poetic, and philosophic fame. Such prospects severally may soothe the fond fancy for the present, but quickly involve in the miry sloughs of disappointment; or if successful, prove fallacious of the expectation, or at best they satiate in the possession: for he is counted the most wretched of men who is come to the end of all his hopes.

But thou, celestial Grace, soft-handed sister and inseparable companion of saving Faith, foretaste of heavenly joys, perpetual source of living waters, refreshing the heart with never-failing delight, thou alone canst exhibit an unfading prospect; for thou endest not but in endless, uncloying fruition. Chance and external circumstance have no power over thee; disaster, sickness, and adversity make us cling closer to thee; ignorance and involuntary mistake cannot remove thee from us, nor can anything besides our own wilful misconduct turn thy face away. Present reward of virtue, the charm that makes her amiable; thou spurrest on our industry, sweetenest our labours, and givest confidence in time of trial; the glory thou settest before us strengthens our fortitude, and blunts the point of those allurements which would urge to intemperance; the serenity, cheerfulness, and inward satisfaction wherewith thou overspreadest the mind, making it easy in itself, renders it more susceptible of hearty good-will to others. Sole remedy of pressing evils, the balmy salve to heal our sores, the security in danger that no intolerable evil shall befall: thine anchor firmly fixed in solid ground, holds us steady amid the pressing blasts of passion, the tempestuous storms of fortune, and boiling torrents of vice and folly; and when the seas are open, the cheering gales waft us smoothly to the desired port.

Do thou inspire me with thine exhilarating spirit, giving energy and courage, but not intoxicating: for the meanest, well-intended labours may claim thy patronage. Afford it, then, benign, soft-shining goddess, diffuse thy mild but piercing rays upon my inward sense; that I may discern the tenacious bottom where thou lovest to cast thine anchor, the strong-connected golden chain whereby thou holdest to it, thy robes and vesture, thy countenance and person; and thence mark out wherein thou differest from those delusive phantoms that flatter mortal fancy, and in what few features they resemble thee.

2. For there is a degree of similitude between all hopes, because they all spring from the same affection in human nature. For as persuasion is the genus, whereof faith is a particular species, so the virtue we have now under contemplation is a distinct species of that general propensity, prompting the mind to solace itself in the prospect of objects apprehended desirable and attainable. If we make an estimate of the enjoyments in human life, we shall find that much the greater part of them is supplied by hope; for sensations seldom satisfy, and then it is but for a moment: the large vacancies left in them are filled up by desire tending to some distant aim, and giving immediate pleasure in the steps taken to attain it. And this accounts for the horror we all have at the thoughts of annihilation, which would deliver us from all our fears, but then it affords no object for desire to feed on: for it is not insensibility that affrights us, we know this to be our portion in sound sleep, which yet we fall into without reluctance, because sleep, being of few hours' duration, leaves room for the expectation of something to be done, and something to be enjoyed on the morrow; but hope is

a necessary ingredient in genuine desire; for if desire fixes upon an end there are no hopes of ever obtaining, it degenerates into the tormenting passion Want.

Let us reflect how much of every day's employment is taken up, and every day's amusement furnished by the care of making provision for something beyond the present moment: it is this spurs on our activity, and gives a glee to the exercises of it; this sets our understanding at work to contrive for the morrow, and makes its well-contrived schemes delightful, even before they can take effect. This raises distant aims, that can please for months and years in the prosecution: it gives the gust to most of those called present pleasures, turns trifles into things of moment, and often proves more valuable than possession. The expectation of catching a paltry game constitutes the delight in sports of the field, and changes toilsome labour into amusement: our cards and dice were no diversions, unless for the prospect of winning an insignificant stake. In these little pastimes, and most of our common pursuits, there must be some rubs and chances in the way to make them a diversion; for there is none in packing the cards, or hunting a bag fox, where you are sure of getting your game without contrivance or trouble: whence it has been supposed that hope cannot subsist without a mixture of fear. But this I apprehend to be the case only in things of small value in the possession, where the whole pleasure lies in the movement towards them, which would be of little duration and unengaging, were not the hazard of disappointment to assist in prolonging and varying the pursuit.

Therefore when fear and uncertainty enhance the pleasure, it is from some incidental circumstance, not as being of the essence of hope, which can often subsist in full vigour without them. A man may please himself with providing materials for building a house, in prospect of the conveniences he shall find therein when finished; or with laying out and planting a garden, in contemplation of the shady walks, the arbours, the elegancies, the fruits to grow in it after a length of time; or with the reversion of an estate to fall in seven years hence; and all this not the less for his meeting with no disappointment in the prosecution of his schemes, nor ever entertaining a suspicion that his expectation may be frustrated. So there is no inconsistency in the expression of a sure and certain hope: for every solace of mind taken in the thought of a desirable good to come, with full assurance that it will come, deserves that appellation, and is the same kind of affection, different only in degree, as if the assurance were abated by a tincture of fear and uncertainty.

Our hopes and fears are the main springs that actuate our motions; and according as we proceed under the influence of either, our time passes agreeably or uneasily. Whoever could contrive means to live constantly upon hope, would be a happy man: for this, when warm and lively, sweetens labour and alleviates pain, and furnishes a delicious entertainment, if the cup be not embittered by the apprehension of danger or disappointment.

3. Hope spreads her table most plentifully when served by Desire, that is, when there is something at hand to be done towards attaining its completion; for then it multiplies and approximates, making the several steps expedient to be taken, so many intermediate objects of hope successively as they occur: for else, if it be fervent, and have no work to keep the active powers in play, it is apt to corrupt into impatience, which is one of the most grinding species of Want. Therefore I conceive it was happier for Jacob in being put to earn his mistress by a seven years' service, than if he

had only been promised her after waiting that time; because impatience might spend itself in assiduity to the task enjoined.

Nevertheless, an assurance of good to come can give delight, although no endavours of our own be needful to procure it; and the pleasure rises in proportion to the degree of assurance, which will prove most durable when founded upon rational grounds; yet it too commonly stands upon another bottom, especially in sanguine and volatile tempers. For there being a great pleasure in believing, that what we like will certainly befall us, this alone often stands in lieu of evidence: it can work persuasion, without aid of conviction, and effectually shut the mind against every suggestion that might tend to invalidate it. When people set their hearts upon a thing strongly, you shall see them hope against hope, turn the most romantic possibility into a certainty, and possess themselves with assurance of succeeding in their expectations upon none other grounds than because the thought is soothing to their imagination. These hollow-grounded hopes, the airy fabric of self-indulging fancy, though pleasing for the present, prove very pernicious and often fatal in the consequences, slackening our industry, taking us off from the pursuit of real advantages we might have worked out, and making us let go the bird in hand for the sake of two in the bush.

It is observed, that lotteries make the common people idle: every one that has but the eighth part of a ticket, promises himself a proportionable share in the great prize, and wastes his time in forecasting how to lay out the produce, when he should be employed in getting his livelihood. Young people just come into possession of a sum of money, justify themselves in squandering it away, upon a notion that they shall find twenty ways of raising a fortune again, though they could never yet muster up application enough to earn a sixpence. Tradesmen, newly entered upon business, set up their equipages, and spend upon the fancied profits of succeeding years. Vanity builds as much upon achievements that will be made, as upon works already perfected. How many projectors persist obstinately in their ruinous schemes, against all reason and experiment? How much do the orthodox in theory indulge themselves in vicious pleasures, upon full presumption of long life and health, and that repentance will come upon them of its own accord, just when needful, without their seeking it? In short, most of the hopes that tinsel the gay and busy hours of life, are fantastic, unsubstantial, precarious, and fragile, or quickly end in disappointment; or when attained, fall below the expectation, or furnish but a short career of employment in the pursuit, and require a continual supply of fresh aims to keep the thoughts in play, which else must stagnate, unless good fortune and external causes throw in new engagements just as the old ones begin to satiate.

Nor is mankind less subject to vain and imaginary fears, for fear will stand upon as narrow ground as hope: were there a lottery wherein one ticket should doom the owner to be hanged, the apprehension of drawing the fatal lot would terrify as much as the great prize elates; for fear multiplies chances, and makes a certain mischief of the remotest danger. Hopes and fears ordinarily chequer human life, yet though they mingle, it is like oil and water, they will not incorporate, but take their turns alternately in giving solace or uneasiness, and that sometimes in very quick successions: but which of them shall predominate depends in great measure upon constitution, upon chillness or warmth of the blood, objects surrounding, or sympathy from persons strongly affected with either. For we are often

made to hope by others' hopes and fear, by seeing them affrighted; therefore persons of very sanguine or melancholy dispositions cannot do worse than in consorting with those of the same complexion.

4. This then being the case with all sublunary hopes, that they cannot secure a happy life without a lucky concurrence of circumstances not in our power to command; a competence of health and subsistence, a natural easiness of temper, a prudent education, keeping the mind clear of turbulent passions and restless desires, a taste for innocent amusement, a succession of practical aims to hold attention engaged, a quiet and peaceful situation with respect to things external: all which seldom coincide in the same person, nor continue without frequent interruptions. Since, then, this is the case of earthly hopes, let us look up for that hope which comes from heaven, which lies open to all, which, when well grounded and rooted, can afford comfort in every situation, and which will never depart from us to the last moment of our lives.

The object of this hope, in its utmost extent, is no less than the whole lot of our existence, which beheld by the eye of faith exhibits an incomparably larger proportion of enjoyment than trouble: and what few troubles there are, appear productive of good greatly overbalancing their pressure. But this extensive prospect is too large for imagination to grasp, unless in some few seasons of retirement, when we can stretch our faculties to the utmost verge of contemplation. The residence in the Mundane Soul, or that final state of happiness which is the effect of pure bounty, not of preparation or reward, like the distant stars, may cheer the eye, but lies too remote to warm the heart with a gleam of feeling hope: nor would avail for common use, because we know of nothing that can be done for hastening our arrival, or improving our condition there. Wherefore it is enough for practical purposes to bound our thoughts within the consequences of our conduct here upon earth, and those in the succeeding stages of our journey through matter, commonly called the next life; which how many centuries it may last, God only knows, to whom a thousand years are as one day. This then is our eternity, nor need we think of anything beyond: it is like the ocean, which we term boundless, because the eye, endeavouring to traverse it, loses itself on all sides in undistinguishable air.

But a prospect to be complete ought to contain some pleasing objects near the eye, which cannot dwell perpetually upon an uniform horizon however luminous, without being refreshed from time to time by less distant scenes that can be discerned distinctly. Nor need we want those nearer scenes to keep up our engagement: for the hope of eternity is so far from being incompatible with temporary hopes, that it generates them in a never-failing succession. There is always something to be done for promoting our future interests, some duty to be fulfilled, some good purpose to be driven at, some opportunity to be improved in the exercise of our active powers, or management of our thoughts: and those aims will supply us with a constant series of fresh hopes for the success of our several endeavours. Nor will disappointment cut us short in the prospect; for we may still hope the event will turn out to our benefit, or that we shall find means of making some good use of it. And when danger threatens, we may hope, if not to escape the evil, at least to receive it with such firmness of mind as that it shall not hurt us, but rather work out some unseen advantage.

5. The effects of this hope are not to be looked for in transports and ecstacies, for nothing violent can continue long; but this hope, designed to afford a durable support, produces a steady, calm serenity, which like the

equal flow of health, gives life and ease to all our motions: for if it be well formed and strong, it will prove the ruling principle of action, shaping our plan of conduct, and all our inferior aims will branch out from it. We shall consider this world as preparatory to the next, and trust in Providence for having placed every man in the situation best adapted to prepare him for the functions he will have to execute, and the enjoyments he will have to expect hereafter. We shall then survey our powers, the materials and opportunities afforded us for using them, the works we may perform with them; taking direction for our measures from their tendency to promote content and peace of mind, and all other means of happiness, external and internal, among mankind, not forgetting our own enjoyments, wherever they can be had without greater detriment to ensue therefrom: for we are parts of that mankind whose temporal interests are our surest mark to guide us in securing our future hopes. We shall lay out our schemes great and small upon this bottom, setting ourselves resolutely to do important services whenever an opportunity opens; when none offers, turning our hands to any present entertainment of persons near us, or our own innocent amusement.

For our activity will never be useless to us if rightly applied, even in the smallest matters, when nothing better lies within our reach: and as men shall give account for every idle, that is, intemperate word and thought, so every right action, thought, and word, however trivial, yet if best suited to the present occasion, shall be placed to the credit of their account. Hence we may gather a constant self-satisfaction in all our motions, our very recreations and pleasures will afford a sincere delight, unmingled with any bitter reflection; our lawful professions, our worldly cares, the daily transactions of life, will not appear loss of time, nor avocations from our principal work. For the same God, being maker of all worlds, visible and invisible, has constructed each in every particular so as to answer the purposes of the rest: therefore we are to esteem nothing trivial and unavailing that befalls in his laws of nature and courses of providence; and may believe that every right action which the present occasion calls for, is the work we are called upon by God to perform, and though it does not make so large strides as the arduous exercises of virtue, yet advances us something forward towards our final goal.

The like reflection may satisfy us with whatever occurrences or outward accidents happen, wherein we had no hand, for we may trust they have their important uses, which we cannot discern, and are the most apposite that could be chosen for the purposes intended: for all things, even those seemingly the most insignificant, work together for our good. When the sight of disasters or calamities forces us to think of the many dangers and mischiefs incident to human life, we may confide in the mercy of Providence for distributing them where they will fall lightest, and putting each person to that kind of trial which he is best able and best qualified to go through. And when evils actually come upon us, we may regard them as our share in the necessary burdens of public service: we know they are but temporary, and may consider ourselves in them as earning some certain unknown profit, or at least that the joy of having supported them manfully will be a near reward to compensate for the present trouble. If it be not in human nature to receive perfect ease under the most pressing evils from the salve of hope, it will at worst assuage the smart, and cast in gleams of soothing comfort at frequent intervals. Thus the efficacy of this virtue extends to all we do, and all we see: it brightens the scenes around us, and fills up our time with interesting engagements; it gives confidence in danger, inspires vigour in

difficult enterprises, and justifies in trifles and amusements; it sweetens our pleasures, and alleviates our pains.

6. All this, it may be said, exhibits a glorious prospect in contemplation; but how shall we find it practicable to gain so strong and lively a hope as shall work such powerful effects? For passion and human infirmity often surprise us into measures that justly check our hopes, or when best disposed the darkness of our understandings leaves us uncertain what course to steer, and raises suspicions that we may be doing wrong, when most careful to do right; but without confidence in the rectitude of our conduct there can be no ground for hope to stand upon. Now I fear it is but too true, that such vivid hope as above supposed never yet was found among the sons of men; but it is our business to examine things in their perfection, and when we see what excellent fruits they will produce in that state, it will be an encouragement to approach as near thereto as possible, for we shall reap a benefit proportionable to the advance we make.

Hope then has a natural tendency to smooth the ground for itself to walk upon, for it takes off our eye from those little aims and fond desires which stir up the passions obstructing its career, and dispels the clouds that make us suspicious of our judgment being faulty. For invincible ignorance and unavoidable mistake are no faults, and may well consist with confidence in the rectitude of our conduct: we become diffident when we mistrust that some secret bias has warped our judgment to determine against evidence, that we have not weighed the point impartially, nor given it the full consideration we might, and ought. But in proportion to the vigour of our hopes, it will abate the causes of that diffidence; for where the treasure is, there the heart will be also; and since it is the evil inclinations of the heart that pervert the judgment, whenever that is set right we shall judge fairly upon the lights before us, which how imperfect soever they may be, we shall quickly see what they direct to; and the consciousness of having made the best use of them, without obscuring them by any mists of our own raising, will give us a confidence in the rectitude of our measures, though we may be doubtful of the success.

7. Such then being the natural effects of hope, it will be worth while to cultivate it with all our diligence; but if it stand upon a tottering foundation, it will have strength to produce none of them; it may please the fancy a little in time of ease, but will fail us when we want it most. Wherefore it behoves us to build our hopes upon a solid foundation, which cannot be laid surer than in the full conviction of our reason, upon a fair and careful examination of the grounds and several stages whereon we raise them: for these we are to understand by the golden chain wherewith the goddess holds to her anchor.

I have done mine endeavours in the course of this work towards tracing the links of this golden chain, and showing their several connections, by the dependence of effects upon causes all derived from one original, by explaining how Freewill takes her turns upon antecedent motives flowing from the same source, by the divine Goodness distributing a far greater proportion of enjoyment than suffering, evidenced in our experience of the world around us, by the Attribute of Equity insuring to us our full share of the good distributed, by the nature of Justice founded upon expedience for the general good, and by the reasons alleged in support of this life being preparatory to the next. But whether anybody shall find this method fit for his use, or think another preferable, it will behove him to satisfy himself well and thoroughly in every step he takes, that he may secure a well-grounded

confidence in his determinations, not liable to mistrust and suspicions afterwards.

That this can be done by the force of human reason exerting itself in philosophical disquisitions, remains to be proved by experience of such as shall set themselves strenuously to make the trial; but how good soever their success may be, they will find it impossible to render the whole process whereby they attained it clear and striking to the generality of mankind, who are much better able to pass a judgment upon historical evidence and matters of fact, than upon metaphysical abstractions. A series of supernatural events and revelations for many ages, from the beginning of the world, is evidence of a superintending Providence that cannot fail to work upon the dullest apprehension. The methods taken in the redemption of mankind, the promise of salvation to all who lay hold of it, can leave no room to doubt of the Divine mercy and goodness. A system of rules and doctrines recorded from the mouths of teachers authentically commissioned from God, remain a certain fund from whence to draw those sentiments of his Nature and Attributes, and those measures of conduct whereon our hopes may be directly founded, without the intervention of long reasonings to sustain the fabric. Whoever is sufficiently convinced in his honest judgment that these are the foundations whereon he may securely rest in his hopes, let him inculcate them strongly upon his mind by frequent meditation, and by due practice of the institutions established for that purpose, that his conviction may become an habitual persuasion: for till then it will not cherish him with a constant gleam of hope, nor obtain a steady influence upon his conduct.

And because happiness in the abstract, without idea of any particular enjoyments whereof it may consist, though sufficient to satisfy the judgment, does not touch the affections so much as when figured by sensible images, therefore it may be serviceable to employ some hypothesis to give scope for imagination to expatiate upon. For this purpose what I have suggested before concerning the vehicular state, may serve for such as can fall into the train of thinking there pursued; but for those who can conceive no sense nor activity, unless in a human shape, and a body more than five feet high, the images of thrones, white robes, palms, and chanting perpetual hallelujahs, are ordinarily propounded. Whatever particular scheme of enjoyments a man can think of with most consistence and probability in his own conception, will suit him best; for the intent of it is not to prove anything but to give a fuller apprehension of what is already proved upon other grounds.

8. This apprehension is the thing that turns our knowledge into Faith, and makes the necessary foundation of Hope: for the contemplation of a desirable object, while there is a suspicion that we cannot attain it, or that it will not be procured for us, can at most amount to a wish, it can never rise to hope. Faith understood in the most comprehensive sense, includes hope: and then only produces the good effects ascribed to it in the last Chapter, of saving, sanctifying, justifying, and enabling us to live a life of righteousness. For it consists in a strong persuasion of the important truths of religion, and a touching sensibility of the benefits expectant therefrom, as has been already observed in § 24 of the same chapter. But very commonly it is used in a more restrained sense, being confined to the persuasion alone, and then the sensibility becomes a distinct virtue, taking the name of hope. This often misleads the zealot to place his dependence upon orthodoxy or mere persuasion: whereas faith in this narrow acceptation will

answer no good purpose effectually: it can neither save, nor sanctify, nor justify, nor be the actuating principle whereby the just shall live: its use lies only in serving for a basis whereon to erect a more beneficial superstructure. Therefore it is necessary to add to our faith the virtue of hope, which may give us a feeling solace in the truths we acknowledge, and urge to the prosecution of those advantages they represent as attainable. For it is hope that draws a present fruition from joys at a distance, and raises a desire to pursue the measures needful for obtaining them. From hence it appears that hope bears as near an affinity as faith to the cordial virtue of Prudence, which consists not so much in extent of knowledge or strength of persuasion, as in a quick sensibility of remote good, giving it the preference before present impulse, enabling us to make use of our knowledge and follow our persuasions. And the same principle constitutes the essence of Fortitude and Temperance, which do not lie in an insensibility of danger or tastelessness of pleasure, nor yet in a speculative judgment of the rectitude and expedience there is in hazarding the one, and foregoing the other; but in a vivid engaging prospect of the advantages to be purchased by undergoing peril, pain, and self-denial. Therefore that faith which removes mountains, and passes undismayed through fiery trials, must be aided and spurred on by a fervent glow of hope, or it could never perform those exploits.

But fear, too, must be founded upon persuasion, for without an apprehension of impending danger there is nothing to be afraid of. Which apprehension is so far from being an ingredient in perfect faith, that in many instances it is mischievous and blameable: an insensibility and hardness of temper against inevitable evils, and such as are prudential, that is, expedient to be undergone for sake of the good consequences redundant from them, is a desirable quality, were it practicable by mortal man, and is mainly productive of Fortitude. Fear is so far only serviceable, as necessary to beget caution, which may awaken our vigilance and stimulate our industry in the prosecution of measures likely to ward off an impending evil. Therefore there is a holy fear strongly recommended in the Gospel, which has its foundation in faith, as springing from a quick apprehension of the dangers of wickedness: and which produces attrition, the first step towards repentance. Yet is this fear never ranked among the theological virtues, as being no more than a succedaneum to supply the deficiency of hope; therefore can never be wholly laid aside with safety by us imperfect mortals, in whom there is always more or less of such deficiency; but if our faith could once rise to its full completion, so as to actuate us with a fervent hope, or perpetual appetence of the happiness put into our power to attain, there would be no use for the succedaneum, nor would it be compatible therewith; because carrying always some degree of uneasiness, for in all fear there is torment.

The aim proposed to be attained by Religion is called by two appellations, Salvation and eternal Life, which are most commonly coupled together or used promiscuously as synonymous terms, because if the one be obtained the other will follow of course: yet are they distinct objects, one exhibiting a deliverance from misery, the other an instatement in actual happiness. And the former may be separated in idea from the latter, for annihilation or perpetual sleep would effectually secure a deliverance from misery: so that the Lucretian hypothesis did not want grounds to flatter its votaries with the hopes of salvation, though it afforded no prospect of positive enjoyment, much less of eternal life. But thanks be to God, who has now put into our power, not barely to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, but

further to inherit the promise of eternal life by a steady trust in the dispensations of his Providence: this then is the brightest side of our prospect, reflecting the most cherishing warmth to ripen our theological virtues. Wherefore it seems an indiscretion in some teachers to dwell too much upon the word Salvation and the wretchedness escaped thereby: for such language chimed incessantly in the ears is apt insensibly to introduce a terror and melancholy over the imagination, by confining it perpetually to the contemplation of dismal objects, and keeping it an utter stranger to those exhilarating ones, which would supply constant fuel to the pleasing flame of hope, and make Religion cheerful.

9. Hope and fear, as I have observed before, are the two main springs that actuate human life, and this as well in the exercises of Religion as in our common transactions. Fear is usually employed first, because you have nothing to propose to the carnal man capable of exciting his desires; so you can only rouse him by the terror of mischiefs to ensue if he persists in following the bent of his perverse inclinations: therefore Religion is represented in the light of duty and obligation, and the acts of it as matter of necessity, not of choice. But after the old desires are worn off, when a liking is acquired to right action, and a satisfaction expected in the performance of it, there is room then for the spring of hope to play; which having taken good hold on the wheels of action, they will run more smoothly and do their work more effectually than while impelled by fear. Therefore the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but perfect love casteth out fear, and rendereth it needless: for whoever has a hearty desire to do as he ought, has no occasion to think of the consequences that would follow upon omitting it; his liking to the work will carry him through it better than any slavish dread that might hang over him.

Nevertheless, it is but too frequent among persons of the strictest piety that they act more upon motives of terror than of hope; they are rather solicitous to escape hell than to gain heaven, and have the miseries of the former oftener in their thought than the joyful prospect of making advances towards the latter: thereby making a grievous burden of Religion, which God has given us for our truest solace, and for a more solid enjoyment than any sensual pleasures can afford. He has declared that his yoke is easy and his burden light; therefore if we find the yoke galling and the burden heavy, we may be sure it is owing to some mistake or mismanagement of our own. But that Religion has taken this melancholy cast, proceeded from the wicked artifices of designing persons in those ages when it was made an engine of policy and spiritual tyranny: for they well knew, that the more they could terrify mankind, the easier they might govern them, and how advantageous it must prove to themselves to exclude all other hopes than such as could be purchased from them for money, or for the most abject submission and implicit obedience.

When our forefathers had rescued themselves from this oppression, still it was not easy to turn men wholly out of their old train of thinking; many injudicious preachers, those especially who pretend to set up a purer form of Religion than the established, strove to affright rather than invite their hearers into it: the terrors of the Lord were displayed in full colours, the doctrine of the strait gate was strongly insisted on, and the gate made straiter than ever the Gospel described it, impracticable heights of devotion required, and religious exercises incompatible with the business of life enjoined as indispensable duties, holiness made to consist in the excessive use of what is only the food to sustain it, and perfection greater than human na-

ture can reach exacted under pain of reprobation. Such strains as these perpetually chimed in the ears often raise great disquietudes in the minds of the serious and well-disposed, making them uneasy in what ought to be their comfort: for because they cannot rise to the fervours of faith and strictness of discipline enjoined, they continually disturb themselves with the thoughts of not being good enough, and therefore still remaining children of perdition.

10. But the saving faith, as described in the last Chapter, consists in right sentiments of God, his Attributes and dealings with mankind, not in a right estimation of our own actions, or a persuasion of their coming up to the terms prescribed in the Gospel: therefore it is a groundless fear that arises in the weakly pious from the want of this persuasion, which is not want of faith. They believe in the power and mercies of God without reserve, and make no doubt he will fulful his promises to such as perform the conditions annexed to them; if then they should fail of the assurance they have real grounds to entertain of their having performed the conditions of acceptance, this is a misfortune but not a sin, it must necessarily make them uneasy for the present, but does not affect their future interests, nor are they the worse men for thinking themselves bad: to make their case a want of faith, they must believe they have complied with all the terms enjoined, and yet that they shall be never the better for it, which is a kind of terror they never fall under; so their distrust is not of God, but of themselves and their own performances.

Nevertheless, as such distrust is not only painful but a hinderance to their progress, for a man never does his work so well as with a decent confidence of succeeding, let us endeavour to probe it to the bottom; and in order thereto examine how we are to understand your good people when they complain of not being good enough. If they mean not so good as to render it needless to seek any further improvements in their power, this is a degree of goodness they must never expect to attain; and were it made necessary to salvation, no man could be saved; for there is none that doeth good, so much good as he ought, no not one. The Apostles themselves never pretended to be good enough in this sense: Paul had a messenger of Satan to buffet him, and received his heavenly gifts in earthen vessels: Peter thrice denied his master, and after the effusions of Pentecost was so much in the wrong, that Paul found it necessary to withstand him to the face; and John declares, that if any man say that he hath no sin he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him. Therefore no man is so good but that he ought to watch and improve every feasible opportunity of making himself better: nor has just cause of disquietude because there still remains room for making further advances in faith as well as good works, and attaining purer and fuller sentiments than he yet possesses of God and his promises.

If by good enough be understood enough to bring them within reach of the divine acceptance and mercies, let them remember that these are not confined to an unsinning obedience, but extend to all who come to God by a lively faith; which faith is manifested in an habitual disposition and sincere desire to do his Will. But that there are other desires assaulting the mind is no proof of there not being this: temptation and human infirmity may overpower, ignorance or error may overcloud, want of present opportunity may stagnate, but do not destroy it: in these cases it lies dormant, its activity remains suspended, but it is not dead. If we find it awakening in us spontaneously at frequent intervals, prompting to good works as often as a

fair occasion opens, perpetually struggling with the enemy, uneasy when mastered, and operating as a principle of action whenever we have the free command of our motions; we may know there is such a habit subsisting alive within us, and may trust it will find acceptance with the Searcher of hearts.

This life is a warfare, and as such liable to various turns of fortune; we must expect often to be foiled by the enemy, and though we may often overcome, we must never expect an entire conquest; but in war nothing is so dangerous as a sudden panic or a settled despondency; and though vigilance and caution be necessary, courage and confidence are more necessary to support a combatant in the day of trial. Therefore we may turn our fears against themselves, as having most reason to be afraid of being afraid: for terror and trepidation would unstring our nerves, and deprive us of judgment to make our best defences, and the best use of our advantages.

In order to get rid of our fears, it will be helpful to know the sources from whence they spring: one is the indiscretion of teachers and writers of good books, who lay down that as an indispensable duty which is only the proper aim of our endeavours; for these two are very different: he that shoots at a target may aim at the white spot in the middle, without thinking himself undone if he should miss it: so to aim at perfection is certainly commendable, but to attain it cannot be a duty, because it is impossible. We are taught, Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect; but this is proposed as an object of our sincere wishes, not a rule of our conduct; for surely no man can expect to equal God himself in holiness and rectitude.

The same indiscretion likewise misplaces our aim, by fixing it ultimately upon religious exercises, and acts of high devotion, which are only the means of strengthening our habitual disposition of acting rightly in the duties of our station, and our intercourses among one another, of resisting the impulses of passion and inordinate appetite, and of behaving with propriety according to every present occasion in active life; for by our manner of performing these, we may show our obedience to the Will of Heaven as much as by our mental services, and by these may make proof whether the others have been effectual: whereas by despising rectitude and propriety of conduct in common matters, which yet are duties in their proper season, men lose many opportunities of satisfaction they might receive in pursuit of feasible aims wherein they would acquit themselves well, and fix their eye upon impracticable assiduities and arduous heights of Religion, wherein they must meet with continual disappointment and alarms at having fallen short of their intention.

Another pernicious mistake of indiscreet zeal lies in teaching men to judge of themselves by comparison; they must be better than other people, or they are wicked creatures; they must aspire at Saintship, and become heroes in Religion, or they are nothing. This may be called a spiritual ambition, which always draws after it a spiritual pride, making them censorious, inequitable, turning everything to the worst side; and so rigid in their notions of righteousness, that they cannot themselves come up to the terms they exact from others; which unavoidably must fill them with vexation and despondency. I would not dissuade any man from aspiring to the highest degrees of virtue he shall find feasible, nor even from heartily wishing to attain greater heights than he can reach; but why may not he

do this without thought of surpassing others? I have shown in the Chapter on Vanity, that there is a material difference between the desire of excellence and the desire of excelling: rectitude of sentiment and action are excellencies in themselves, without reference to what other people think or do, and if our conscience bears us witness that we have a sincere habitual desire of them, what hurt is it to us that thousands beside have the like testimony? There is room in heaven for us all, and we might be glad to persuade ourselves that all without exception shall get thither; but since we cannot find sufficient warrant to believe this, let us stand disposed to make as few exceptions as impartial reason and candour will permit.

Nor shall we fail to find our own account in this procedure; for a man may much easier and more rationally satisfy himself that God is good to multitudes than to a small, select number: his dependence will rest better upon the largeness of divine mercy, than upon his own peculiar merits. Therefore he need not be shy of giving everybody their due, as well of commendation for their well-doings, as of excuse and extenuation for their miscarriages, whenever there is room for it: for he then will be entitled to take the same allowances for himself he has used to make for others; his conscience will follow the rule in the Gospel, With that measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again; and he may employ the like style of prayer as taught there: Father, judge of our trespasses with the same favourable construction as we have judged upon the trespasses of our neighbour.

Thus the three virtues concur in supporting one another: Charity which thinketh no evil, strengthens our Faith, enlivens and brightens our Hope: on the contrary, the narrow-minded, the spiritually proud, the severe and the rigid, are ever found to abound most largely in misgivings, terrors, and disquietudes for their own safety. Yet a great deal depends upon natural temperament and the state of our bodily humours: there are some in whom you can scarce raise an alarm, and others whom you can never inspire with a cheerful thought, how just reason soever there may be for either; but there are few without their vicissitudes of temper. When the blood runs chill, and the spirits low, there is an uneasiness which, having no apparent cause, is generally mistaken by persons of a serious turn for uneasiness of mind, and gives occasion for groundless suspicions that all is not right there: they are most solicitous then to pass a judgment upon themselves, and the judgment they pass is always unfair and unfavourable. Wherefore it behoves us to observe the mechanical turns of our imagination, and when sensible of them, to reserve our self-examinations for those seasons wherein our judgment is clearest and our understanding most open: and if we make our decisions carefully then, we may preserve a confidence in them afterwards, though we should lose sight of the reasons whereon they were grounded.

11. But fears cannot be banished presently, nor ought they to be let go unless in proportion as there is a better principle springing up to actuate our motions: therefore the best way of casting out fear is by inuring the mind to hope, and making it our business to seek for those sources from whence it may be drawn, which after a little practice will appear not to be so scarce nor scanty as might have been imagined before making the trial. But it behoves us not to take up our thoughts too hastily before we have well satisfied ourselves of their foundations, and settled them thoroughly in our judgment: for if any of them stand upon hollow ground, or appear

to totter upon a subsequent review, this will fix such a suspicion upon the rest that he shall never be able to place a secure dependence upon them.

The hope of a blessed immortality, if well grounded, is a never-failing source of satisfaction whenever the mind stands in a situation and temper to contemplate it strongly, and throws in many a pleasing reflection at intervals between our worldly engagements. But this is too remote a prospect for mortal eye to feed constantly upon: nor need it, having other supplies from nearer objects lying in the line towards this. Therefore it is a mistaken zeal that would fix our thoughts always upon heaven or heavenly joys, and keep up a perpetual glow of ardency towards them; for they are propounded to us not so much for our present amusement, as for engaging our desire of taking the steps leading to them; and if it be recommendable sometimes to raise a degree of fervour in contemplating them, it is in order to transfer a proportionable warmth to our resolution, sufficient to carry us through the measures requisite to obtain them, and surmount the obstacles lying in the way.

The persuasion of this life being in every part of it preparatory to the next, may satisfy us that there is always something to be done more or less, for advancing our future interests: for there is a right and a wrong in every action, how trivial soever, and the acquitting ourselves well in it is a step in our progress, which affords an immediate object for the eye to fix upon. Our knowledge of the divine goodness gives us assurance that the way to happiness lies open to every man, and the paths of it discernible to such as earnestly seek them: therefore if we be heartily desirous of the end, we have a reasonable hope of finding the means; for desire naturally urges to seek, and he that seeketh shall find, to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Thus hope generates hope, and our attachment to the ultimate aim is a certain security for success in the intermediate, for success consists in having acted for the best upon any particular occasion, and the desire of so doing will direct to the means of its own gratification.

If we lie sometimes under uncertainty which part to take, we may hope for a speedy issue of our doubts, and that we shall neither determine too hastily nor remain diffident of the determination when made: for the business here is not to decide unerringly, but to make a proper use of the lights we have. Our faculties and means of information come from Providence, which we may be sure has apportioned them to us in such measure as to suffice for our purposes: therefore while following what they clearly point to, we are secure of a solid satisfaction. If difficulties overpower us, there is a pleasure in having struggled with them, which will urge us to hope we may succeed better another time. If conscious of not having done so well as we might, we may reflect that perfection is not attained presently, and may expect that our habitual desire of acting right will strengthen itself by frequent exercise. If we do not discern the expedience of our rules, yet we may confide in them that sooner or later we shall feel their good effects. Even when we deny and humble and afflict ourselves, which there is no reason to do unless for the sake of some greater good appearing consequential therefrom, either to our own judgment or upon the authority of rules, we may encourage ourselves to proceed by contemplating the prospect of that greater good; when pains and losses and afflictions fall upon us, we may reflect that they have an end, that we shall receive a joy from the degree of fortitude wherewith we have supported them, and may say with Eneas, The time will come when we shall look back upon these scenes with pleasure.

But though we may justly expect great things from our fortitude when hope and practice have nourished it up to some degree of vigour, yet it will become us to avoid the arrogance of the Stoics, who set up their Wise-man in defiance of heaven, as standing above the reach of fortune: for that being wrapped up in his integrity, he could remain unhurt amid the sorest evils. But it is a vain imagination to think we can ever raise ourselves above the reach of accident, or gain such a firmness of mind as can never be shaken; our dependence must rest upon that Power whose disposal fortune lies under, and what fortitude we can acquire will serve as being a recommendation to his favour; while we strive to do what we can for ourselves we have a rational ground to trust in his goodness, that he will suffer no evil to befall us, but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, or supply us with better strength than we have now belonging to us, that we be able to bear it.

The same Power likewise having placed us in this world, assigned to every man his station therein, giving us appetites, desires, and necessities, formed us into a composition requiring continual refreshments both of body and mind, we may presume all things were ordered for our benefit: therefore in the business of our profession, the provisions for our accommodation, our compliance with customs, our little intercourses of friendship and civility, our recreations and innocent amusements, provided there be no vicious indulgence, but everything being done in its proper season without being a hindrance to any more important work, we may hope that what we do will tend to some further profit besides the present engagement. For every moment of time that is not misspent, is well spent, and is not lost nor fruitless, how trivially soever employed, provided there were no feasible opportunity at hand for employing it better.

Would your righteous people, instead of striving to work themselves up into continual transports greater than human nature can support, consider the duties of active life; what they owe to the world, to society, to the care of their health, and preservation of their spirits, without which they cannot perform their higher duties with effect and vigour, and lay out their plan of time accordingly; this would furnish them with variety of practicable employments, the prospect of succeeding wherein would prove a constant succession of under-hopes, branching out from the principal, or at least compatible therewith: and while actuated severally by these inferior hopes, they may be truly said to be doing the Will of God, though they had him not at the time in their thoughts, and would promote their future interests in the gratification of their present desires. For enjoyments rightly pursued, is our proper aim: we are not sent here to be miserable, and there wants nothing more than the fixing our desires upon their suitable objects, to reconcile the pleasures of this life with the hopes of another.

But till we can provide ourselves with a set of hopes, all growing from the principal, to fill up our time and answer all occasions that may happen, it will be necessary to employ fear as a succedaneum to supply the place of such as are wanting; therefore it well deserves our best diligence and contrivance to increase our stock, that we may have the less need of such a troublesome succedaneum; for when hope and desire urge to the same point that fear would drive at, the latter becomes wholly superfluous. The Apostles, though they preached up the wrath to come, for prevailing with such as could not be worked upon without it, yet for their own use they had not in contemplation the terrors behind them, but the joy that was set before them. And whoever could find means of imitating them, so far as to live always by hope, must lead a happy life: the service of God would

to him be perfect freedom, he would think nothing of duty and obligation, but do his work continually out of choice and inclination. Nor would he confine his hopes within his own centre: he would study to make his demeanour not only right but inviting, and communicate his happy temper by sympathy to as many as he could: for soft-handed Hope, whose soothing touch makes the possessor easy in himself, and pleased with all around him, never fails to open the heart for giving a readier admittance to her eldest sister Charity.

CHAP. XVII.

CHARITY.

The last, but not the least in dignity or value, thee everlasting Charity, let me invoke: and well may I style thee everlasting, for thy years are not to be counted, nor of thy Being is there beginning or end. Thou wast with God before the worlds were made, coeval with the Attributes: thy mild persuasions moved him to create; it was they first prompted Infinite Wisdom to contrive, and employed Omnipotence to execute, the glorious universal plan. Thou still inclinest the Almighty Maker to preserve his stupendous work, to uphold the perfect order running throughout the whole, to bless the creatures he has made: and under thine unceasing influence will he proceed throughout all the boundless ages of eternity. Thy younger sisters Faith and Hope, he gave for solace and direction of mortal men while grovelling in this vale of wretchedness and darkness; but when admitted to their native Home, then shall Faith be lost in intuition, and Hope be swallowed up in blissful experience: thou alone, immortal Charity, shall enter with us into the heavenly abodes, shall place us in our stations there, and incorporate us into the blessed society.

For thou fillest heaven and earth, pervadest the mighty Whole of Nature, and formest the sinews that knit together all the parts and members in amicable concord. Thy silken cords suffice to hold the most perfect creatures to the throne of Glory; through them they derive their blessings, and by them are drawn to pay their free obedience; for they know not fear, they think not of obligation, but thine impulses are to them instead of laws, to keep them steady in performing the Will of God, and mutually promoting the happiness of each other. From thee proceed their mighty powers; for thou producest perfect union, and union raises weakness into strength.

The earth that holds down heavy bodies in her surface, is but a mass of matter divisible beyond the reach of human comprehension; the Sun, whose potent grasp compresses the wide wandering orbs around him, is but an assemblage of innumerable atoms: it is the united force of imperceptible particles that together form that gravitation which fixes the everlasting mountains, binds down the restless ocean within his capacious bed, entangles the unconnected air that it dissipate not in empty space, keeps the Moon constant in her monthly courses, curbs in the huge planetary Worlds and roving Comets that they transgress not the due bounds in their wildest excursions. Yet matter joins in those great works by blind necessity, one general law runs through the component parts of an enormous mass, and compels them to act in concert as one agent: but this law must be administered, and the force whereby it prevails begun by spiritual substance; for body can only

transmit the motion it has received, and is but the channel, not the origin of the impulse it conveys.

Whence then that all-affecting power of the Mundane Soul, which agitates the stupendous whole of universal matter? that ceaseless energy, unfailing source of gravitation, cohesion, and repulsion, which draws remotest bodies to one common centre, which binds the parts of metals in indissoluble compact, which works the wheels of animal and vegetative life, darts the expanse of light around with inconceivable velocity, excites the still swifter vibrations of all-pervading ether, and gives exhaustless vigour and activity to the lifeless lump. From harmony and union springs this prodigious strength of the Mundane Agent, for the component spirits are singly weak, perhaps scarce able to stir a grain of dust that flies before the wind; it is the efforts of innumerable hosts, uniting in the same design, that suffice for every mighty work of nature. But what cements this perfect union, and makes them act as one individual Agent? What else but unreserved, fervent, unabating Charity? For blind necessity binds them not, impulse cannot affect them, to pain and fear they are utter strangers, and rigorous law holds not her scourges over them: but choice and judicious inclination are the constant springs of their activity.

Their filial love to the almighty Father, perpetual fountain of endless blessings, holds them attentive to observe, and ever ready to fulfil his Will, inspires them with ardour to execute his high behests, and makes them joyful to serve as instruments in carrying on his gracious plan of Nature and of Providence. Their mutual sincere good-will to one another prompts them to communicate their lights throughout the vast society, from whence results their boundless intelligence; and doubles their zeal to assist in preserving that regularity in the material world, which they know requisite to serve the uses and promote the happiness of the spiritual: nor is their joy abated by the smallness of their several powers, because as large as wanted, and sufficing for their share of concurrence in the most important works: for Charity exults in the smallest good offices, when conscious they were the best that could be done, and were all that the occasion rendered needful.

Their affection for the congenial Spirits immersed in matter, cut off from all communion with the mundane host by surrounding walls of flesh, urges them to attend their wants: they flock by thousands, as occasion requires, to work the springs of animal machinery, to carry on the vegetative process, whereby the earth yields her increase, to marshal and commix the elements, and prepare for the imprisoned exiles all the accommodations and pleasures they can receive, or the general order established from above will permit: well knowing that whatsoever service they do to one of the least of these their brethren is done to the common Father of heaven and earth, and is an addition to the stock of happiness in the universal family.

By thee then, all-cheering all-sustaining Charity, we may approach the nearest to our elder brethren enthroned above in realms of bliss and glory: by thee best may we attain some faint resemblance of our Maker; for God is love, and without it the mightiest of his creatures are but nothing. How shall I bring thee down to assimilate earth to heaven? how paint thy features to the sons of men? Art and invention cannot hit thy likeness: to draw thee justly, the pencil must be guided by the heart. Whoso has tasted of thy sweets needs no persuasion to seek after more, nor much pains to acquire more: for thine insinuating graces once admitted improve themselves daily, and to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance. But thou must first be introduced by prospect of the benefits received from

thee, of which there is not wanting plenty to invite the considerate beholder.

Thou strengthenest Faith, for the good man can easiest persuade himself that God is good, and place the firmest, heartiest trust in Providence: but the selfish sees no goodness that does not immediately touch himself. Thou enlargest Hope, for thy candid well-wishing eye discerns enjoyments all around in the remotest and least-valued of our fellow-creatures; thereby beautifying the face of Nature, and discovering wider streams of that bounty whereon our hopes depend. Thou overcomest sluggish indolence, for heartiness to serve turns labour into pleasure: thou givest joy in performance of the slightest kind office; art the sole lawful means of making another's good our own, because thou alone canst make it ours without dispossessing him. Thou feastest on good wishes when there is room for nothing else, canst rejoice in the prosperities of the former ages, distant countries, and remotest posterity; canst feed imagination with schemes of beneficial services; canst seek, and readiest find comforts in the distresses and uses in the evils thou beholdest.

When thy well-woven bands unite societies, they act with greater vigour and to better purpose, than private interest, fear, and cob-web law, can make them; and wert thou to prevail throughout mankind, thou wouldst banish war and injury, cozenage, waste, and idleness, vanity and competition, and restore a paradise upon earth. And though thou canst not work thy full effect in single persons amid a selfish world, yet whoso could attain thee genuine, undebased by mistakes or weakness, would find he had acted prudently, and how little soever he might be able to benefit others, had taken the readiest road to his own satisfaction of mind and truest self-interest.

2. For self-interest rightly understood is the only solid basis of all our virtues: whatever refined sentiments we may pretend to, they might upon a fair and careful examination be traced to that origin. Self must be acknowledged to lie at the bottom of all we do, and to be the first mover of our activity: human nature is so constituted, and perhaps all created nature, nor can we conceive the highest intelligences to do anything unless for the benefit or satisfaction found in the deed: for it is the privilege of God alone to act upon pure disinterested bounty without the least addition thereby to his own enjoyment. I have endeavoured in my Chapter on the Passions to explain in what manner our sincerest affections take rise from our wants and pleasures, as the sweetest flowers grow out of the dirty ground: thus the mire of sordid appetite must be the soil wherein to plant them all; but Faith is the stem to bear this choicest blossom, Charity, which will never blow strong and healthy without a persuasion that the interest of our fellow-creatures is our own; and Faith stands most unshaken when growing from the root of solid judgment and rational conviction.

People are apt to say they bear a general good-will to others, because they are taught it as a duty, because they hear it universally applauded, because they should be ashamed to want it, and think they have it because they say so: their profession is so far hypocritical that it deceives themselves, or if it does sometimes make a faint effort to bloom in a real affection, it scarce ever produces the fruit of good works, for the least trouble in the performance oppresses it, the slightest cross accident withers it up, or sensual pleasures and engagements blow it quite away. For affection cannot be learned as a lesson, nor performed as a duty, nor infused by shame, neither can it subsist without an opinion of the object affected beneficial or

satisfactory. Therefore it behoves us to examine thoroughly and impartially the grounds of our believing that the good of others is our own, and to settle well the several steps whereby we arrive at that conclusion.

Let us consider calmly and seriously whether every effect, as well in the mind and imagination of sentient creatures as among the operations of matter, must not have its adequate cause, whether our constitution, our vigour of body and mind, or our good fortune, were originally of our own procurement; whether we could undertake to have behaved with the same degree of discretion, sobriety, and rectitude we do, had we been born with distempered bodies or imperfect organs, without sight or hearing, or bred up among blackguard boys, or Hottentots: therefore, whether our virtue, as well as our other advantages, were not derived to us from external sources. Let us then resolve with ourselves whether all those sources did not flow from one origin, The First Cause; whether we can imagine him to have made any provision of second causes without exact knowledge and particular purpose of all the consequences they would produce: and whether it does not follow from thence, that our condition, both in bodily endowment and mental acquisitions, is precisely such as was allotted us.

These points being established, let us next examine whether there is any reason to believe he has allotted unequal portions of his bounty to his creatures, among whom there is no intrinsic or other difference than what arose from the situation and circumstances wherein he placed them. That he has power and full authority to deal with them as he pleases we can have no doubt, nor ought we to murmur at receiving less than others, for we have no claim to what we do receive: but what ground is there to suspect he will bestow his favours partially? Men are led to make a difference in their dealings with one another by interest, by expedience, by accidental likings or aversions, by benefit or hurt received, by example, by humour, by the smallness of their powers, which can reach but to a few; none of which motives can take place with him; and what warrant have we to suppose he will act arbitrarily without a motive, only because he may, and because none can hinder him? From whence it may be concluded, that his kindness extends alike to all in their whole existence, and if it appear to flow unequally in some stages of their Being, the difference will be compensated in others: so that there is one general fund of bounty and happiness throughout the Universe, wherein we are all partners, each having his proportionable interest in the whole, and therefore concerned with whatever tends to make the least increase or diminution of the common stock; and consequently we cannot add to it by doing good; nor take from it by doing hurt, to any fellow-creature, without profiting or endamaging ourselves.

Let us likewise contemplate the nature and aim of Justice, which can be supposed none other than to keep sensitivo-rational Beings steady in the prosecution of their mutual interests: therefore reward or punishment must be annexed to every action and sentiment according as it conduces to promote or obstruct the general good: and it may be expected that whatever good or evil is done to any, will rebound upon the head of the doer. But if any finds this chain of reasoning too intricate for him to manage to his satisfaction, let him take the shorter, plainer road of authority, and have recourse to the Sacred Writings: where he will see that loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves, are hinges whereon hang all the law and the prophets; that these are the first and second commandments, to which there is added none other to make a third, for what other

precepts are given bear a reference to them, and are virtually contained in them: that we are exhorted to imitate our heavenly Father, who is good and gracious to all, who causeth his sun to shine, and sendeth the rain on the just and unjust: to follow the example of our Redeemer, who went about doing good, preached to publicans and sinners, laid down his life for enemies and rebels; that by giving a cup of cold water, and doing every kind of good offices to our brethren we do a service to God himself; pave the way to everlasting bliss, and work the foundation of all our hopes and expectations; that if we beat and misuse our fellow-servants, we shall ourselves be treated accordingly, and with whatever measure we mete, it shall be measured unto us again.

3. But though the flowers grow out of the dirt, whatever of it enters into their composition becomes purified in the passage, and they retain nothing of the foulness in the original from whence they sprung: in like manner Charity, though shooting most vigorously from rational self-love, yet when perfectly formed has no tincture remaining of the parent root; for if we cannot serve another without first thinking of our own advantage or of the Divine command, our service may be prudence, or it may be piety, but it is not charity, nor have we gained this virtue until it can operate in us as a principle of action, without aid of other motive, and we find ourselves prompted instantly to perform good offices, upon the sole consideration of their being such. Our reflection is not large enough to carry constantly in view the remotest consequences of our proceedings, nor the reasons inducing us to enter upon them; nor shall we ever do our work effectually until we take a direct liking to the work abstracted from the wages, and that becomes the object of inclination which was first recommended by reason as prudential.

But we have seen in the proper place, that it is the nature of Translation to throw desire from the end upon the means, which thenceforward become an end capable of exciting an appetite, without prospect of the consequences whereto they lead; and that our habits and most of the desires that occupy human life are of this translated kind. Therefore when we have fully satisfied our Judgment upon the foregoing considerations, that doing good to others is our interest, it will be expedient to inculcate this conclusion frequently upon our minds, and seek opportunities of acting in pursuance of it; for by continual contemplation and practice, we shall quickly get such a habit of kindness as will urge us to a compliance therewith upon every occasion offering, instantaneously, before we have time to reflect that it is our interest; and in proportion to the vigour of this habit, and its ability to overpower laziness, trouble, humour, vanity, and selfish desires, we are possessed more or less of the virtue of Charity.

And we may assist our progress in making the acquisition by means of our particular affections, gradually assimilating our general good-will to the manner of their impulses. I presume there is scarce any among us, who has not some friend or brother, or wife, or child, or benefactor, or companion whom he can sometimes, when in best humour, take pleasure to oblige, without expecting therein the gratification of any other appetite. Let him then reflect on the motions of his heart upon these occasions, and he may learn from thence how to stand affected, I do not say with the like fervour, but with the like sincerity, towards other of his fellow-creatures: until by often practising this lesson, the pleasure of pleasing in general becomes one of his favourite pleasures, for which he has a sensible relish and habitual propensity. For our natural and accidental conjunctions are the

easiest steps by which we may rise to be citizens of the world, and members of that body whereof he, who was the first born of every creature, is the head. And this was figured in the Platonic allegory in the Vision, where Thalassian Venus was made conductress to the Uranian, for she first opened the heart of Psyche, taught her to look beyond herself, and prepared her for reception of the graces of the celestial Goddess.

4. Nevertheless, there is a very material difference between the Virtue and the common run of inclination: the former being really true and personal, the latter but nominally so. But what leads us to mistake the name for the reality, is the general abuse of the word Person, which is often understood of a man's shape and make, but seldom reaches beyond his bodily composition, or his character and qualifications; whereas it has been shown in former Chapters, that Person properly denotes the spiritual substance, abstracted from all its modes of existence; for these may be and are continually varied; but personality is what makes a man to be himself, can never be divested from him though he were to pass through a thousand metamorphoses, nor is interchangeable with that of any other creature.

Therefore when a young fellow falls in love with a girl, whatever he may fancy, it is not her person he admires, but perhaps her pretty face, her sprightly eyes, her delicate shape, her genteel carriage; or at best her sweetness of temper, her discretion, her understanding and accomplishments. In conjugal affection increased by years, it is the long intimacy, the endearing converse, the union of interests, the partnership of cares and troubles and pleasures that charms the soul. Parental fondness rises from the consideration of being our own blood, the habit of attending to the cares of nurture and education, the hope of seeing the good fruits of our endeavours, the solace and support expected from returns of duty. In a friend we love his sincerity, his honour, his similitude of temper, his capacity to serve or please us, his readiness to join in mutual intercourse of good offices. Thus all our affections fix upon something belonging to the person distinguishable and separable from it, some natural endowment or subsequent acquisition, or relationship to ourselves: all which depend upon the structure of the body or mental organization, or situation wherein the object stands with respect to us; and any other person or spiritual substance whatever, placed in the like circumstances, would have engaged us as strongly.

While inclination remains in this state, it is not quite removed from selfishness; for we feel no emotion towards the person without thinking at the same time of some quality or circumstance thereto belonging, apprehended beneficial or agreeable to ourselves. But in time and by degrees affection may grow more refined and purely personal, so as to remain unabated after death has dissolved all connections, and removed the object from us, when it can no longer do us any benefit or pleasure, and after the want of those sweet intercourses we regretted sorely at first is worn off by rolling years.

Were we to suppose Fables realized, and that I should find my Euridice in the body of a bird or a lap-dog, methinks I could take great delight in tending and procuring it all the enjoyments it was capable of receiving, even though it should retain no remembrance or knowledge of me: on the other hand, were I to meet with another person, exactly and undistinguishably alike both in body and mind, still while I knew it was another, and not individually the same, it would not quite satisfy; but I might still be apt to talk in some such strain as Milton's Adam, Should God create another Eve, and I another rib afford, yet thought of thee would never from my heart.

For in my most serious meditations, when contemplating our prospects in futurity, it is an additional solace to hope that she already gathers those fruits of a well-spent life which hang in expectation only to us below: and could I have certain intelligence of that happy situation and manner of passing her time fancied in the Vision, it would be the most joyful news I could receive.

Now to vary the scene, let us suppose a person shown a child, who he could be assured would twenty years hence be to him a faithful wife or bosom friend, in whose company and conversation he should find great happiness; I imagine his affection would be anticipated, and he would stand disposed to wish well and do benefit to the party, before he could receive any returns therefrom.

Since then such is the nature of the human mind as that it can entertain personal affection upon the remembrance of past, or expectation of future sources of endearment, why cannot we make this affection more general by a diligent application of the methods we have at hand for introducing it? What though we see nothing in the greater part of our fellow-creatures to engage us at present, we may know that in the worst-formed bodies, and most untoward organizations, there lies an immortal spirit, which we may hope will one day be partaker with ourselves in a state of glory, of consummate intelligence, of noble sentiments, of pure love, of mutual kindness, and exalted happiness.

If there be any now-a-days so whimsical and heterodox as to hold the old exploded doctrine of pre-existence and eternity of creation, he may turn his whimsies to an excellent use by employing them as a foundation of his Charity. The most despicable creatures he sees in the streets, clothed in deformity and nastiness, pent up in narrow conceptions, their ideas gross, their desires sordid, their thoughts grovelling, their understanding scarce better than the brutes, overrun with cross-grained humours, untoward dispositions, turbulent and tormenting passions, with fears, and wants, and wishes, regrets and envyings, strifes and animosities, and all diseases of the mind: the most ill-favoured and unfortunately circumstanced of these objects he may consider did once, perhaps not many years ago, lie together with himself absorbed in the Mundane Soul, in perfect bliss, exalted understanding, enlarged views, and universal love. He may behold in them an old acquaintance, having lived with him for many ages in closer intimacy and intercourse of purer friendship, than the dearest connections here on earth can produce; and though now for a time disjointed, disfigured, rendered unsociable, fallen from their high original, he may sympathize with them as fellow-sufferers, only immersed a little deeper than himself in the jakes of matter, the drain of the universe: he may cordially wish them well, and stand ready to embrace every opportunity that should offer of rendering their imprisonment more tolerable. Herein imitating the Author of their Being, who only permits the discerption, the fall, and debasement of his spiritual substances, for public services unknown to us; yet forgets them not in their lowest deprivations, but remembers mercy in the midst of judgment; and though he may suffer them to incur much severer punishments than any this world experiences, because the exigencies of government require it, he will in due time interpose with his Omnipotence, if he has not already provided natural causes for the purpose, to deliver and reinstate them in their primitive purity, happiness, and concord whereto they were created.

5. Thus each man, whatever his peculiar notions be, if he has any serious

well-digested ones, may find something in them, which, properly applied, will help to make his affection personal; and when it is so, it becomes genuine Charity, which in its nature must be universal, because every creature, however circumstanced, has a personality and a capacity of receiving good and evil, to be the object of our desire. Therefore the truly charitable man will stand disposed equally to all his fellow-creatures, but the exercises of his benevolence must necessarily be limited and directed by his powers and opportunities; he will employ his endeavours in the service of those near him, not because best entitled thereto, but because in a situation capable of receiving most benefit by him; and if he disregards any, it will not be for want of good will, but for want of skill, or ability to profit them. He will always pursue the greater good, promoting that of the public, or of numbers where he can, and where he cannot, applying himself to study the benefit of any within his reach, by important services, if such offer, or in failure of those, by any pleasure or little obliging office the occasion presents.

We are directed to take the pattern of our Charity from our self-love, and taught to love our neighbour, not as we do our child, our brother, or our friend, but as we do ourselves: now we do not love ourselves for being handsome, or wise, or witty, or good tempered, or accomplished, or virtuous, or born in such a place or family, not for any adjunct or circumstance observed in us, but for being ourselves. If we be distempered, deformed, wretched, and involved in crimes, this does not abate our fondness, which rests directly upon the person: and from hence we may learn to bear a like personal regard for others, however circumstanced.

Perhaps it will be said, it is not possible in human nature to affect another in equal degree of fervency with ourselves; I believe it is not, neither is it possible to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect, yet both these are among the precepts enjoined us: but they are propounded not as indispensable duties, for nothing above our nature can be such, but as objects of our constant endeavours; and by due application of our endeavours we may attain such a degree of personal good-will to others, as by balancing our other desires, shall keep us steady in the course of conduct we are designed to run. For our having Charity does not infer that we must be void of all other desires: if we have that hearty and genuine, we have done well, though it should not so wholly engross our minds as to exclude every motive beside: it will indeed banish selfishness, but selfishness, as has been shown in a former place, is not the having a regard for ourselves, but having no regard for anything else. For universal Charity is not incompatible with private Prudence nor particular affection; so far from it that it encourages and furnishes us with rational inducements to cultivate them, as I hope to make appear in the sequel.

6. For the proper object of Charity is the greater good of our fellow-creatures with whom we have intercourse: now let us suppose we were all taken with such a romantic fit of generosity, as utterly to neglect our own pleasures and interests for those of one another, how would the world go on the better for it? Had my Euridice and I undertaken every day to put on one another's clothes, and cram victuals into each other's mouths, regardless of our own wants, I fear we should both have been very awkwardly clothed and fed. Or had I an intimate friend fifty miles off, and out of prodigious affection we should each ride away from his own house to take care of the other's estate, we should scarce find matters managed entirely to our satisfaction: we should soon be tired of this extravagance, and agree, for mutual benefit, each to mind his own affairs and leave the other to him-

self. There are numberless instances wherein men may know and severally provide for their own occasions, better than they could do for another: and therefore if they were to omit to do so, there would be a grievous loss of happiness among them all.

And the same reason justifies us in running into little societies and partnerships; for our powers being small, the effects of them would be utterly lost, like a handful of salt thrown into a pond, if diffused among too many: whereas by severally confining our services within a compass where they may be felt, they will prove of real value, and the good of the whole will be best promoted. We may likewise remember that we are but sensitivo-rational animals, and neither reason nor personal Charity can do their work so effectually, as when assisted by some mechanical impulse. Therefore it is prudent and highly commendable to cultivate our particular affections, for they will gradually become personal, lead us nearer to a general good-will, and do the work of charity, though by another spring. It is better a man should do good to one or a few than nobody, and he will do it more vigorously and effectually where he stands inclined to the party, than he would without such incitement: besides that our own pleasure deserves regard when it does not tend to anything hurtful, and we shall have more of it in performing the same office for a friend than for a stranger. So that the world is better served upon the whole, and better pleased, by means of our private affections, than it could be without them.

Nor indeed could it be served at all without them, for a man that is void of natural affection never has any humanity, nor concern for his fellow-creatures: he can only be lured to assist them undesignedly by some advantage or private aim that happens to coincide with the public benefit. And since none of us have so perfect an humanity as would invigorate us sufficiently upon all occasions, it will be expedient to encourage such regard to profit, to honour, or credit, or claim to mutual assistance in our own needs, or other schemes and amusements hitting our fancy, as will prompt us the same way. Thus whereas duty has been commonly holden divided between our neighbour and ourselves, each being entitled to a share of our time, and that we may justifiably do many things for our own emolument, without reference to him; it now appears that both branches, if rightly laid out, unite in answering the same end.

For while we follow the rules of sound prudence in the conduct of our private concerns, and harbour only innocent and allowable desires, we serve others by serving ourselves, and advance the general good in pursuing our own gratifications. The mechanic who works to raise a competency, the politician who labours to be great, the nobleman who projects a magnificent building or lays out an elegant garden, every man acting suitably and becomingly in his station, contributes something towards the encouragement of industry, the preservation of order, the benefits of society, the accommodations and conveniences, the entertainments and pleasures of life. If our general plan be well formed upon the solid bottom of reason and judgment, we may follow the impulse of inclination in executing the several parts: for we shall be doing benefit to others at the seasons when we have them least in our thoughts.

7. But if we have a fund of genuine Charity in our bosoms, it will restrain our other inclinations from doing anything contrary to it; for we are to remember that our services are primarily due to all our fellow-creatures alike, as being such; and if we may make a difference, it is because some stand near within our reach, or because we can have the aid of some

habitual impulse which enables us to act more vigorously in their behalf, than for any others. Therefore we must observe a justice and equitableness in our dealings with all, giving them their due share of our attention, which we may do notwithstanding our particular connections; for the Law is equable to all, its protection extends alike to the nobleman and the cottager; yet the law admits great inequalities of power and property, because necessary for the maintenance of order and government that it should do so. In like manner Charity will incline us to exact justice and equity, but not equality in our conduct; because it is for the benefit of the whole that we should appropriate our services more particularly to some than to the rest.

This then being the rule whereby to try the rectitude of our private affections and allowableness of our schemes, if we have the virtue now under consideration, it will keep us from all immoderate fondness, unreasonable partialities, and party attachments, and from fixing our hearts upon any pursuit of profit or pleasure, without reflecting whether the consequences may not prove more detrimental than advantageous. For though, as I said before, we shall move most briskly in the prosecution of our schemes by carrying our eye along the line of inclination; yet in the first laying them, and in proper seasons of examining them afterwards, we ought always to take the general good into consideration. But then it will be necessary to consider the general good in all its branches, not confining our thoughts to any one, overlooking all the rest; for the requisites to happiness are many and various, and it behoves us to contribute towards it in the way that lies open to our passage.

When we speak of the public good, we commonly understand thereby an increase of wealth and plenty, or territory, or national strength; and the mention of a man's private interests ordinarily conveys the idea of something relative to his fortune or preferment: but though these be advantages deserving our assistance, yet externals alone will not produce happiness. To introduce it among a people there must be liberty, good order, and internal polity, useful arts and sciences, a sociable, helpful disposition, exempt from contentious, revengeful, and encroaching humours: and to make the condition of single persons complete, we may remember there are two other requisites besides competence, to wit, health and peace of mind. Therefore it is our business to survey our powers, opportunities, and inclinations, and apply them where they may be most serviceable; aiming at things feasible rather than specious in theory, and joining in any good work begun by others; for so we shall do more benefit than by acting singly. So far as our influence extends to the actions of other persons, we are to regard the improvement of their abilities, as well as their indisposition to apply them: for great abilities, with a very faint desire to serve, will do more good in the world than a glowing heartiness without any power to render it effectual.

Not but that it were a desirable thing to inspire all men with the same largeness of heart and genuine Charity we wish to attain ourselves; and we ought to endeavour it with as many as we can; but to make it general is impracticable. A great part of mankind are obliged by their situation to attend solely to making provision for their own necessities, and multitudes have taken up some fond passion or fancy for their ruling principle of action, which they will not lay down: to think of moving them by any other spring, is a vain imagination; but if the spring they move by can be turned to work some good purpose, it is an advantage well worth our attempt to gain.

For the advancement of happiness among our fellow creatures is our proper aim, and if we can procure anything to be done towards it, though undesignedly by the doer, it is better than not to be done at all.

Therefore we ought to contrive, so far as the little sphere of our activity reaches, to turn the wants and passions, and even the follies and vices of men to some profitable use; for policy and honest artifice are laudable in a righteous cause. Whatever really improves the public weal, without wounding it in some other part by ill example, or weakening the influence of some salutary rule, serves to be prosecuted by such methods as are feasible: for in this case the end sanctifies the means. But then we must take care to be very sure that our end is honest, and really the same we apprehend it to be: for there are frequent mistakes upon this point. Nothing is more common than for men to cover their proceedings with a pretence of public good, or the service of their neighbour, when in fact they are actuated by some private interest or fancy, though they do not know it: for the heart of man often deceives itself, nor can we always discern our true motives of action, or distinguish them from argument occurring in justification of the deed. Therefore it is a dangerous thing to make free with rules or use artifice, until we have maturely weighed all the circumstances of the case, and can assuredly know the principle whereon we proceed.

8. Nor is there less difficulty in distinguishing Charity from weakness than from private views and secret propensities: there is a softness of temper, usually styled good-nature, which renders a man incapable of saying no to anything; this is as distant from Charity as fondness is from love. I have observed in a former place, that he who can never refuse a favour, can hardly be said ever to do one: for it is wrested from him, not granted: he is driven by the trouble of a refusal, not prompted voluntarily to what he does. I am far from persuading anybody to turn a deaf ear against entreaties, or to remain insensible of the wants and desires of other people: but the decision ought always to be made by his own judgment, and what he does should be his own free act, not a compulsion upon him by dint of importunity, moving gestures, earnest and pathetic expressions: he may laudably sympathize with the requester so far as to make his desires his own, but let him remember that his own desires ought to lie under the control of calm and sober reason. But genuine Charity is ever rational and steady, and though she will employ the passions as her servants, to do her work more effectually, she will never suffer them to become her masters, nor dictate to her what work she shall do.

And though she seeketh not her own, yet will she guard her own against unjust invasions, as knowing it to be a part of the common stock, which it is her principal aim to support. There is a selfishness in mankind which makes them eager to employ and encroach upon others, wherever they can, in prosecution of their own interests or fond fancies, without regard to what hazard or inconvenience they put another to by so doing: as this temper tends greatly to the diminution of happiness among the whole, whatever resists and discourages it must tend as greatly to the general advantage. Therefore the preservation of our just rights, and resolute pursuit of our reasonable claims, in opposition to such as would obstruct us, is so far from being an abatement of our Charity, that it assists in overthrowing her greatest enemy: and what degree of sturdiness we can acquire, to maintain the determinations of our impartial judgment, will enable us to act more steadily and vigorously in her service.

Besides that it is the property of charity to multiply herself among as

many as she can, therefore, if we reduce her to such a sickly state as must retard her growth, and deter others from admitting her to strike root in themselves, we shall prove but ill friends either to her interests, or those of the world we live in. Those good people, who by a milkiness and too easy pliancy, or scrupulous tenderness of temper, judge partially against themselves and lie open to be abused and imposed upon by every body, bring a discredit upon the virtue; making it be looked upon as a folly which one should be ashamed to give into, and furnish an argument to the selfish to justify their practices. How efficacious soever their honest sincerity may prove to obtain reward for themselves, they serve only themselves therein: nor perceive that they act uncharitably by preventing, as far as in them lies, the like disposition, and benefits redounding therefrom from becoming more general.

And the like consideration might keep us from affecting an austerity and strictness of virtue, which would give it a forbidding aspect: if we have any valuable quality belonging to us, we ought to spread it as wide as possible by rendering it amiable and inviting: but when it appears gloomy, laborious, and irksome in the possessor, nobody will be tempted to wish a share in the possession with him; therefore he ought to study ease and cheerfulness in his motions, to excite a willingness in others to follow his example.

There is likewise a space of vanity that often mingles in the exercises of virtue: men are desirous of over-topping others, and would raise an admiration by soaring to heights that nobody else can come near; this attempt the world will look upon as an insult, and set themselves against the man who makes it, and his practices, running down both instead of striving to copy them. Therefore if he were able, still it would be highly impolitic and uncharitable, to exhibit such an object of admiration as should drive another into despair of ever attaining the like: his study ought rather to be how to show virtue practicable, and set an example that may invite and encourage others to follow it; accommodating himself to their occasions, and becoming all things to all men, if by any means he may gain some. For the charitable man is not content to go to heaven alone, while there remains anything in his power that might draw other travellers to join him company in the journey.

9. Charity in former times was placed solely in giving money to the poor, or to what was called pious uses; but this was an artifice of the Popish clergy, who turned Religion into a trade, and endeavoured to engross all the property of the world to themselves, under the notion of purchasing heaven by paying it into their hands. Relief of the distressed, when prompted by a sentiment of humanity, is certainly an instance of Charity, but to confine the virtue to this single exercise of it, is a gross abuse of the word; for it extends to all kinds of good offices within our power, and all objects within our reach, to the world, to our friends, to the rich as well as the poor, to the conveniences and enjoyments as well as the necessities of life, to the advancement of happiness as well as the alleviation of misery: therefore, if we suffer the poor to engross more than their share of our attention, we do an injury to others who were entitled to a part of it.

I shall not undertake to ascertain the exact measure to be observed upon this article, which is best left to every man's discretion: let him only pay an equal regard to all the duties of his station, and they will keep one another in just balance. But as the matter has sometimes been managed, alms-giving is so far from being the whole of Charity, that it is no exer-

cise of it at all; and for the possibility of its being none, we have the authority of Saint Paul, who tells us a man may give all his goods to feed the poor, and yet not have Charity: we cannot suppose the man here specified to give away all his goods upon temporal views, but if he does it out of superstition, or for fear of being rejected at the last day, whether the action be right or no, still it does proceed not from a charitable disposition.

The strict obligation to charitableness, the dreadful consequences of a contrary temper with respect to our future interests, and the crying injustice of detaining from God that part of his gifts which he demands by his substitutes, the poor, are so perpetually insisted upon, that it affrights men into a compliance without any voluntary disposition of their own. This changes the nature of their Charity, turning it into a traffic with Heaven: they do not give, but pay as a debt, or buy off a punishment, and at best think to purchase a seat among the blessed. These inducements are proper and necessary to be urged for bringing men to learn a habit of Charity, who had no spice of it in their character before; for we have seen in the former part of this Chapter that it grows most vigorously out of self-interest; but when once perfectly formed, it can produce its genuine fruits better without them. It is said, the Lord loveth a cheerful giver, but no man can move cheerfully that acts out of fear or obligation: it is compulsion and necessity, not choice and inclination that guides him.

And here it may be remarked in honour of the present age, and as a proof of the improvement rather than degeneracy of the times, that the world is actuated by purer motives than their forefathers: formerly people thought they must lay apart a certain portion of their substance, which they gave to the priest, or got rid of in any manner carelessly, no matter how it was disposed of, so it passed out of their hands; it was a draught upon Saint Peter, which he was obliged to answer: so they gave to others only to serve themselves, and get a remittance of cash into the other world, for their necessary occasions there. But now mankind are careful to make a judicious application of their benefactions; they form into little bodies, they meet, contrive, and consult together how to bestow them for the best; and this they can do upon a sentiment of humanity for their fellow-creatures, without being driven by terrors, without thinking of themselves or their future interests; and if a pleasing reflection occurs afterwards, it is a spontaneous thought, an unexpected reward, not had in contemplation at the time of their earning it. They may esteem what they do a duty, may believe the total omission of it a dangerous offence, and the due performance meritorious; but these are motives lying dormant in the box, ready to fall with their weight into the scale when needful, yet never having an opportunity of entering it, because genuine benevolence is beforehand with them, operating to action without giving time to any other consideration to present itself.

Where there is such a principle subsisting in the mind, it will ascertain the measure of its own exertions without other guidance. People who are made charitable by the obligation thereto, never know when they have done enough; they are perpetually scrupulous of applying anything to their own innocent pleasures, or even conveniences, or compliance with customs, lest it should be a taking from the just rights of the poor: whereas, if they have contracted a real appetite for works of humanity, it will prompt sufficiently of its own accord, it will sometimes carry them through self-denials unreluctantly upon proper occasions, it will settle its own boundaries among

their other virtuous habits, and mark out its province better than can be done by rules and precepts; as our appetites of hunger and thirst, when not vitiated by nauseas or unnatural cravings, direct us to the proper quantity in our meals better than any scales or measures.

Thus it is our business to acquire an openness and benevolence of temper, which will prompt, not to one branch of our duty only, but to all kind of good offices within our reach. Nor need we be disturbed at the smallness of our abilities, nor expect always to perform great services: our powers and opportunities are of the appointment of Providence, who best knows what portion of them is fitting for us; we can only use our industry to improve and apply them, and our industry will be proportionable to the vigour of the principle whereby it is actuated. Therefore it is a work of Charity to be nourishing a sentiment of it in our hearts, though there should be no present opportunity of making it beneficial to any, nor room for exerting it otherwise than by wishing well and rejoicing in the prosperities of others: for though nobody is the better merely for good wishes or sympathizing in their good fortune, yet these things tend remotely to the general profit by storing us with a principle that will quicken our industry, and turn whatever abilities are given us to the best advantage they are capable of, and by helping to spread the like principle among those we converse with.

The slightest good offices have their importance, as they inure the mind to a readiness in performing greater works: even expressions of kindness contribute something towards increasing it, when they are not empty form nor overstrained, but issue spontaneously from a real sentiment of the mind. Politeness is the skin of virtue, but our skin is a part of us, and serves to protect and warm the flesh. And though it be sometimes employed as a covering to vanity and malice, (for many people are polite to show their own breeding, not to please the company, and it is said, the Spaniard often kisses the hands he wishes were cut off,) yet the abuse of it does not prove it to be of no use: for translation will bring that to be heartiness, which was at first no more than a compliance with fashion, and the most civilized nations are observed to be the most humane.

But the benevolent man will have a solid substance under his fair outside, which will not be a covering put on, but growing from the flesh; he will think little of his own credit in his civilities, nor affect to shine foremost in the beau monde: his hearty desire to please will be the spring of his action, and he will only take direction from the forms of the world how to express his sentiments most intelligibly, and exhibit an object most agreeable to the beholder. He will delight to see services done and pleasure given, though he had no hand in contributing towards them, will be capable of enjoying the enjoyments of others, and smiling at lucky accidents wherever they befall. Even in his solitary moments he will not be unsociable, and if he can contrive nothing that may prove beneficial, his thoughts will run spontaneously in contemplating the manifold blessings of life; how the distressed have their comforts, the gross and stupid their gratifications, the various conditions and tastes of mankind their respective conveniences and accommodations, and what a copious stream of bounty pours down from above upon all corners of the earth.

Nor will his mental eye forbear to stretch sometimes to the invisible regions abounding with hosts of congenial Spirits united in one common interest with the inhabitants of earth, and knowing that one Lord was the contriver and governor of both worlds, he will stand persuaded that the

plan of Providence here bears a reference to that established above, and the occurrences and transactions passing among us serve for some purposes of superior Beings. This will make room for a pleasing reflection, that the effects of his industry may extend further than he can trace them; and while he works for the benefit, or even innocent amusement of himself and fellow-creatures within his notice, he may be doing a service or pleasure unknowingly, to many others far beyond his ken. And it will be some consolation in the evils he undergoes, or sees befalling around him, to think they are not wholly unprofitable, but if human nature were better without them, yet are they conducive in some manner to the happiness of other natures, in a much higher degree than they take from that of the sufferers.

Nor can his complacence in good, wherever beheld, suffer him to overlook the lowest part of the creation, but he will find a sensible satisfaction in surveying the various conveniencies and accommodations provided for the brutes, their feedings and resting-places, their gratifications of appetite, their pastimes and wanton gambols, which to them afford a sincere and suitable enjoyment: and will lend a candid and willing ear to any probabilities that can be offered of their having a larger portion of existence than vulgarly thought of. For even supposing it could be proved, that they have an individuality and unperishableness together with the two primary properties of perceptivity and activity, and are discerptions too from the general fund of spiritual substance, only imprisoned in closer walls and a little deeper disguised than ourselves, and entitled by the divine equity to a compensation for the very unequal treatment had among them here; what hurt would the discovery do to us? wherein would it endamage or endanger our future interests? what religious sentiment or moral sense would it weaken in us? Shall our eye then be evil because God is good and equitable to the least favoured of his creatures? or are the treasures of his bounty, think we, so scanty as that we must grudge every portion of it bestowed elsewhere, lest there should not be left enough for us? It is vanity alone that makes us averse to every favourable supposition extended beyond our own class: we are not satisfied with having the care of Providence over us and the hopes of heaven opened to us, unless we may engross them solely to ourselves: we want to be lords of the creation, to look down with contempt upon all our inferiors, and think it a disparagement that they should be capable of ever rising to our own level.

But genuine Charity rejoices in every extension of happiness wherever it can be found or imagined; and had we a competent share of this principle, to cast into the opposite scale for counterposing the weight of vanity, a little reflection on the unlimited goodness of God might quickly turn the balance in favour of our younger brethren in animal life. And if we think it inconceivable that such an abject condition as theirs can be the prelude to a more exalted state, let us look back upon ourselves, who we expect shall one day be made Isangelous, equal to the Angels: when we lay sleeping, squalling, and spewing in the cradle, how much more sense and intelligence had we than a puppy? when growing and moulding in the womb, what were we better than a worm? how many thousands of our species pass into the other world directly from those abject states of senseless, helpless infancy, no greater in dignity than the puppy and the worm?

But since it is both fashionable and orthodox to believe death an annihilation to the brutes, and that they were created solely for our uses, without

the least regard to any benefit their existence might be of to them, I shall not presume to gainsay, for fear of drawing upon me from all sides those two terrible weapons, Ridicule and Exclamation, which cut down an opponent at once, without leaving him any power of resistance. Yet am I permitted by general consent to allow them sense and feeling, and this is enough to bring them within the verge of Charity; whose extensive compass takes in everything standing in a capacity to receive good and evil; whose influence will withhold us from all wanton cruelties, from hardening into an utter insensibility of their complaints, or putting them to unnecessary pains or hardships; and dispose us to take pleasure in doing anything to render their lives more comfortable, that does not draw us off from our duties to other creatures standing in a nearer relation to us.

Nay, could we be sure they were but Cartesian machines, insensible of pleasure or pain, still it would be prudent to keep the measures of humanity with them for our own sakes: for the habit of Charity may be weakened by acts which do no mischief to the subjects whereon performed. When Fulvia stuck pins into the tongue of Cicero after his head was brought her by the executioner, it was regarded as a flagrant instance of revenge and barbarity, though the lifeless member could receive no hurt from her: and by mangling dead bodies, men may bring themselves into a savage unfeeling temper that will make them dangerous to the living; much more by the practice of cruelty upon creatures that have at least the appearance of suffering thereby. Solomon says, the merciful man is merciful to his beast; which implies that by being unmerciful to the beast he will become so to his own kind: for it is our disposition of mind that governs us in our dealings with both, nor is it possible for a man utterly to cast off all tenderness and humanity to the inferior animals, without contracting a callousness and obduracy that will cover him from any impressions by the distresses of his own species.

11. But it will be said there is a necessity to slaughter the animals for our food and other uses, to destroy vermin that would annoy us, to employ the beasts in severe drudgeries in our services, and make them assist in the works of human industry; to bring vice and wickedness in our own species to punishment, to return a proper treatment upon injuries, to hurt and disappoint another in defence of our persons and properties against attacks and impositions, to oppose, contend, and struggle with competitors, to make our best advantages in driving bargains, to annoy the enemies of our country, grieve at their prosperities, and rejoice in whatever befalls to their detriment; to espouse the cause of our friends, relations, or coparceners in one common interest in prejudice of strangers, to make a difference in our treatment of persons, according to their capacity to do us good or evil, and according to their ranks, accomplishments, and possessions, rather than their integrity and virtue; to fix our whole attention often upon our own wants and concerns, without thought of what will ensue therefrom to anybody else; to exact painful services and rigorous discipline; to harden our hearts against distresses, cries, and importunities; and when in pain, or under pressing uneasiness, we cannot raise a thought of anything else: all this might make it seem that universal Charity, and equability of disposition, resulting therefrom, were impracticable, repugnant to human nature, and the circumstances of situation wherein Providence has placed us.

But we should consider that Charity may be had without casting away all other motives besides; for human nature will move by many springs, each whereof may lie unimpaired and vigorous, though not always in actual

exercise: and if their workings are repugnant and obstructing to each other, it is for want of good management, which might bring them to act in concert together, and make their motions mutually dependent. For men are apt to take their rules of conduct for so many detached aims, to be pursued severally in their turns; they apprehend that they must be charitable sometimes, and to a certain degree, but too much of it, or to act constantly under its influence, would be pernicious and foolish; they conceive it to stand opposite to Prudence, and have its separate province distinct therefrom; which must necessarily lessen it in their liking, and put them under difficulties what proportion of their cares to employ upon either, so as to give one its just due without encroaching upon the other.

But it is the business of Philosophy and Religion to reduce our rules into one regular system, one compact body, all the members whereof mutually support and assist each other; to hang the whole law and the prophets, our particular attachments and prudential measures upon Charity, or the desire of advancing the general good, and not barely to reconcile it therewith, but to deduce our other occasional pursuits therefrom. But what renders this difficult to compass, is, that men have the same mistaken narrow notions of Charity, as they have of happiness; they apprehend happiness to lie in the gratification of every present desire without regard to the unhappy consequences that may ensue at another time; in like manner they apprehend Charity to respect only the object at present before them, without considering the general interest. Whereas the road to pleasure sometimes lies through labour, pain, and self-denial, we must often fly from it in order to obtain it, and that conduct is most beneficial which will produce the greatest amount of gratification upon the whole. So Charity is distinct from natural affection; the latter in its nature must make a difference of persons and stand confined to particular objects, the other is universal and equal to all: and though it will encourage the cultivation of private propensities, because of their tendency to the general good, yet sometimes it directs the other way, because the road to the general good lies through the damage and disappointment of particulars: so that we must sometimes seem to turn our backs upon goodness in order to pursue it effectually; and whenever compassion, compliance, and tenderness would do mischief to more than they profit, it is Charity to break through them.

Now let us consider whether, if no uses were to be made of animals, the condition of men and animals taken jointly would not be endamaged thereby; and whether their being made necessary to our accommodation, is not a direction and warrant from God, whose Charity is pure, unreserved, and equitable to all his creatures, to apply them to our necessities: confirmed therein by his example who has taught them by the constitution of their nature to destroy and prey upon one another; and whatever is done under his warrant and direction we may rest assured is agreeable to goodness and equity, though we should not be able to discern the consistence.

Let us consider whether, if vice and wickedness were to pass unpunished, it must not abound more among mankind, to the destruction of order and society, to the unsupportable detriment of the honest, and ruin of the innocent, who might be involved in the contagion: whether if the like treatment were given to all kinds of behaviour, the like respect shown to the cobbler as to the nobleman, to the weak as to the powerful; if there were no contention nor competitorship, no attachments of each party to their private interest in making contracts, no zeal for the prosperity of our country, no partialities to little societies and partnerships, no exacting of labour and dis-

cipline from the idle and refractory, no application of our whole thoughts to our own wants and distresses upon pressing occasions; whether the business of the world would go on better, the conveniences and pleasures of life become more plenty, or the evils of it fewer. Hence it appears that in all allowable acts of opposition and selfishness, we are doing the work of Charity, contributing to the general good: and if we keep this reflection in mind, the practice of them will never abate our sentiment of universal good will, which will remain vigorous to withhold us from exercising them, whenever they appear manifestly tending to greater mischief than profit, or are not supported by some rule that we may trust was founded upon expedience.

The like reflection will preserve us from all revenge, animosity, contempt, insult, and delight in vexing or disappointing, nor suffer us ever to terminate our prospect upon the hurt or displeasure of another, but retain always in view the necessity or indispensable rule obliging us to do it: will bring us nearer to a resemblance of our heavenly Father, who remembereth mercy in the midst of judgment, and never executes judgment but as a means to effect the purposes of goodness: will make us just in our dealings, candid in our interpretations, willing to justify those who oppose us, desirous to find excuses for every conduct, equitable to all, giving the least deserving their due, capable of contending without anger, and opposing without ill-will, retaining a love even for enemies and persecutors, so far as to endeavour and wish them well in all particulars consistent with the interest of our country, or our own self-defence: and in general will place the vexations and disappointments of others in the same light with our own labours and troubles, which we sometimes undergo cheerfully upon prudential motives or necessity, never upon choice or inclination, but should always be better pleased if we could effect our purpose without them.

12. And here I cannot help once more congratulating mankind upon the progress they have made in both branches of Charity, the inclination to good and aversion to evil, beyond that of former times; as they proceed upon more judicious and purer sentiments in their relief of those who want it, so are they more reasonable and humane in their contentions. Wars are waged without hatred, battles fought without rancour and barbarity, laws of war established by general agreement, and measures kept between the greatest enemies: the estates of the conquered are not taken from them, nor their persons made slaves, nor slaughter nor extirpation practised in cool blood. Our military men behave as intrepid in the day of danger as those of Alexander or Cæsar, but when the heat of skirmish is over, they treat their prisoners with humanity and the tenderness of a friend; and in such intercourses as the service will permit, they can show a just esteem and civility to persons of the adverse party, as readily as to their compatriots.

Our Religion has gotten rid of that censoriousness, rigour, and exulting at the damnation of reprobates, which were once esteemed characteristics of godliness: but these corruptions are now almost wholly drained off upon the Methodists. Men can pursue their own advantages without wishing to distress others, contest without quarrelling, maintain their cause without acrimony, and defend their rights without anger.

Even party zeal does not run the same mischievous lengths as heretofore, it does not break out in tumults to plunder and fire houses, nor produce proscriptions as in the times of Sylla and the Triumvirate, nor assassinations like those of Milo and the eve of St. Bartholomew, nor make an entertainment of malice by drinking to the confusion of others: it makes its last retreat in calumny, defamation, and scurrility, in abusive poems miscalled

satires, for the object of true satire is vice and folly, not particular persons, and weekly or occasional squirtings of the press, which are greedily swallowed by the shop-keeper, the mechanic, and the mob, or some few gentlemen who have nothing of the gentleman beside their dress and equipage belonging to them, nor have yet thrown aside the rudeness of the school-boy, and what ill humours they contracted, when children, from the kitchen.

But it is to be presumed the leaders, however they may sometimes encourage these virulences to serve a turn, do not enter into the same sentiments themselves: for they know that struggles for power are fair between contending parties, and have no reason to be angry with their competitors for gaining an advantage over them, as being conscious that they should have done the like themselves, could they have found the means of effecting it. And this consideration in an equitable temper, making all allowances for another that one would desire for one's self, may extend so far as utterly to take away resentment and detestation in all cases whatever: for there is no intrinsic difference discoverable in the person or spiritual substance of men, the difference lies in the body or mental organization, according as they were moulded by natural constitution, education, example, company, or circumstances surrounding them. Therefore, when we feel our anger rise at anything displeasing done by another, we may reflect that we should have done just the same had we been in all respects circumstanced exactly alike: which will convince us that our treatment of them ought to be guided by a view to expedience and necessity, and not by passion.

13. There is still another branch of Charity which must not be omitted, and that is Charity towards God different in form and appearance only, but not in effect; for we can exert our love of God no otherwise than by doing kindness to his creatures; and both concur jointly to lead us into the same courses of conduct. Our Maker stands above the reach of our kindness, as being incapable of receiving either benefit or pleasure from anything we can do: if he were an hungered, he would not tell us, for the cattle upon a thousand hills are his; if he wanted the tribute of praise and adoration for his entertainment, he need not seek it from us, for the blessed Spirits in a thousand heavens await his commands: but we are exhorted to make it the business of our lives to serve and please him, solely because what is called his service will render them most valuable to ourselves and beneficial to one another.

The apprehension of doing a service and pleasure to God is very proper to be entertained in the imagination, Religion indeed cannot well subsist without it; it is this gives vigour to our religious exercises, inspires a zeal to carry us through our difficult duties, and arms us with resolution to resist the force of vicious habits, under the notion of their being distasteful and odious to him; but it is very dangerous to let such an opinion catch hold on the judgment. For I have endeavoured to make appear in the proper places, that imagination and understanding are different faculties, the same set of ideas not being suitable to both; and that it is many times expedient to take up persuasions occasionally which do not tally with the convictions of our reason. We are but sensitivo-rational creatures, having in our natures a spice of the Angel and of the beast; and the food that is most wholesome and nourishing to the one, is unfit for the other's digestion. In the execution of our resolves, zeal and ardour, and whatever cast of imagination helps to foment them, will stand us most in stead; but in season of deliberation, when we are to lay out our measures and examine their grounds, we cannot be too calm and cool: that our considerate judgment may check the luxuri-

ances of zeal, and prevent the temporary persuasions necessary to support it from growing into settled opinions.

For when men once begin to think seriously that they can do real service or give actual pleasure or uneasiness to God himself, they mistake the essence of Religion, placing it only in externals; which are but necessary expedients to protect and cherish the substance; and because these are styled divine services, imagine they cannot practise them too much, nor too intently esteem them meritorious, and that by their assiduities they shall become prime favourites, persons of consequence with God: which must naturally tend to generate spiritual pride, and incline them to despise, censure, and detest their fellow-creatures as his enemies, odious and loathsome in his sight. And it may be observed, that those who turn Religion into an engine of craft and ambition always begin with instilling a notion that God has an interest of his own in certain modes of worship and professions of belief, and that we can serve him therein by resisting, distressing, or destroying opposers.

But the love of God is another kind of affection from that of our brother; it is not a desire of profiting or obliging, or when no important service occurs of making the moments pass more smoothly with him, for there is no matter for such a desire to work upon: it is rather a filial respect and dependence, a looking-up to him as our protection and source of our happiness, a taking solace in the contemplation of his almighty Power, his Providence and Goodness. And that we may not want matter for this solace to feed upon, let us reflect from whence all our blessings are derived, whose air we breathe, whose food we eat, whose ground we walk upon, whose creatures we associate amongst, whose workmanship we inhabit, whose instruments we see and hear, and speak, and act, and think with; how many more conveniences and enjoyments we have than troubles, how much larger grounds of hope than fear for the future, how many pleasures and comforts abound throughout the visible world around us, and how good reason there is to believe, that whatever sufferings befall will earn a far greater profit in the long run.

Let us then turn the tables, imagining for a while there were no God, and consider what our condition must be upon that supposition; how uncertain, how hopeless, how dismal the prospect: for a prospect of some sort or other will rush upon our thoughts notwithstanding all the sophistry that can be employed to shut it out. Endeavours have been used to show that sense and intelligence may result from a composition of matter very finely organized, because our sensation and understanding depend upon the condition of our bodily frame, growing and decaying with that, varying from time to time as that varies: but though our sight of objects depends upon the magnitude, form, motion, and superficial textures of bodies before us, and various commixtures of rays reflected from thence, and if the light be withdrawn, we can have no vision at all; nevertheless, all the figures and colours in the world will not produce vision without an eye to behold them. In like manner, though our ideas depend upon the structure and present state of our mental organization, yet this only exhibits the objects, nor can ever produce an actual perception without a perceptive substance within to discern them; which substance cannot be a compound, nor can perceptively reside unless in an individual. Thus we have an individuality which renders us unperishable, incapable of annihilation by any law of nature dissolving our material composition: but what new objects we shall have to perceive, what smooth or rugged particles we shall adhere to, what organizations Chance or Neces-

sity shall provide for us, remains wholly uncertain: in this lottery, whereon our whole fortune depends, there are millions of blanks to one prize. And even in this life, subject to many formidable evils whose causes we cannot investigate, all will be hazard and casualty, guided by no order nor regard to our interests, nor any rule of apportionment distributing them severally where they may be easiest borne: so that we have nothing but thoughtlessness and insensibility of danger to make us enjoy prosperity securely; and in adversity nothing to comfort us, nor alleviate the pressure with a reflection that even troubles are sent in wisdom and kindness, and will terminate in our profit. Therefore we have reason to rejoice that this is not the case, that our future fate does not depend upon the chances of a lottery; and if I may be allowed the expression, to think it the luckiest thing in the world, that there is a benign intelligent Power by whom all the laws of nature and courses of fortune were established, and that whatever shall become of us when turned out of our present lodging, we can never go beyond the reach of his care and jurisdiction.

14. It has been said that God created all things for his Glory, and he is extremely jealous of it: blasphemy has been always esteemed the most heinous of crimes, and the highest perfection of godliness lies in doing all things for his glory. But let us consider wherein glory consists, not solely in might and power, for they are objects of terror and astonishment as well as of admiration, according to the other qualities joined therewith. It is goodness and beneficence that make power glorious; for, because they, however fervent, can profit nothing when joined with weakness, therefore we admire those abilities which may render them effectual; and though the world has fallen into a custom of admiring greatness in itself, yet when they find it turned to their own damage, it loses ground in their estimation.

Whatever high acclamations may have been lavished upon mighty conquerors, destroyers of cities, enslavers of nations, by such as hoped to share in the spoil, or who stand out of their reach, or wish themselves able to do the like; those who are plundered and oppressed by them never join in the panegyric, they may pay a slavish homage through fear, but cannot honour them in their hearts. Let us consider the common opinion of the Devil, who is believed a Being of prodigious power and cunning, able, if he were not restrained from above, to make more havoc and devastation than all the Alexanders and Cæsars, the Saracenical caliphs, and Machiavelian cardinals that ever lived: yet is he the general object of abhorrence and detestation, nor do we find ourselves inclined to honour him the more for his matchless strength and piercing discernment: and those Indians who are said to worship him, do it that he may not hurt them, not in reverence and admiration of his more than mortal power and sagacity. Since, then, God has so constituted his creatures, as that they cannot sincerely honour him for power alone, dissociated from goodness, if he were fond of glory, this would urge him to be gracious, that he might receive the ample tribute of praise and hearty adoration. But glory, regarded as an ultimate end, is a selfish principle, doing good to others only accidentally, as a means of procuring gratification to the doer: whereas we cannot imagine any addition of happiness or pleasure redounding to the Almighty from the blessings he bestows, therefore his goodness is pure, wholly disinterested, and the good of the creatures his ultimate point of view in the exercises of it.

But he is jealous of his glory, because lying in the line with goodness, because it is of the utmost importance to his creatures, nor can suffer diminution without detriment to them. For it has been shown in CHAP. XV.

that having just sentiments of God is the true saving Faith, the coming to the Father, which alone can insure us a solid peace of mind, unite us in the bands of love to one another, make us industrious in promoting the general good, and lead us on the certain road to our future happiness. Thus Charity towards God and towards man join to draw us into the same course of conduct; we do all things for his glory if we do all things for the benefit of one another, and prosecute no under-schemes but what were laid out upon that plan: and as I have observed in the first Chapter of this Volume, our duty to him grows out of our duty to our neighbour and ourselves.

And because the possessing our imagination with an idea of pleasing him, and an awful sense of his Majesty, assist us greatly in curbing our inordinate desires, and make us zealous of good works; therefore it behoves us to cultivate those sentiments in ourselves, and propagate them among others. But to make those sentiments effectual to answer their purpose, we must not omit either of the foundations which are the support of glory: to celebrate him in our hymns, the Lord great and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle, who only doeth wonderous things will not suffice, unless we likewise proclaim him the Lord good and gracious, whose mercy is over all his works, who hateth iniquity because it is mischievous to his creatures, who taketh vengeance of the sinner to work his amendment, to stop the progress and prevent the evil effects of sin, who abhorreth the wickedness not the person of the sinner, and remembereth mercy in the midst of judgment.

But hymns and hallelujahs, how aptly soever composed, both in matter and form, are not an ultimate end: they are only useful to beget and strengthen proper sentiments in the mind: therefore we must take care to pursue our religious exercises in such manner and measure as may not interfere with our duties in active life. We may remember that God has said, I will have obedience and not sacrifice; and how he declared as matter of reproach against the Jews, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me: so then by doing good to ourselves and one another, with an occasional thought of acting agreeably to the Will of God therein, we offer him the most acceptable sacrifice, and best promote his glory.

It is agreed, both among divines and philosophers, that the road to virtue is rugged and thorny, but leads into a delightful country; while in the thorny way, our passage must be irksome, the dispensations of Provide ce will seem severe and hard, and what evidences we can collect of the divine goodness will work only a speculative conviction of the understanding: but when gotten into the open plain, and having begun to gather the fruits of our toils, we shall taste and see that God is good, and our theory will become an intimate persuasion of the heart. Therefore if we have any zeal for the divine glory, or desire of possessing our minds with the fullest sense of it, we shall make haste to pluck up those foolish passions and fond desires, which bear the thorns obstructing our passage, and make the way rugged; that we may the sooner attain this intimate persuasion, which will prompt us to give him unfeigned honour, and to love him with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength.

But this love cannot be perfect unless it produce obedience to that other commandment, which is like unto the former, and inseparably connected with it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: for if a man say that he love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar, and the truth is not in him and if he says, he has a zeal for the honour of God, but takes no care to

ering others likewise to honour him, he deceives himself, and thinks only to make a merit with heaven rather than to advance its interest: therefore in his very exercises of virtue and piety, he ought to have a regard to his neighbour as well as himself, to make his behaviour exemplary as well as good; so to suit his plan to the usages and conveniences of life, that virtue may appear practicable, inviting, and amiable, to let his light so shine before men, that they may see his good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven, which they will not do merely for the greatness of the works, unless performed in such manner as they might wish to imitate them, and if any measures offer that will certainly tend to the benefit of mankind, to suffer no scruples to obstruct him in pursuing them. For honour is greater when given by numbers than by single persons, and if it were possible to procure God to be honoured among multitudes by dishonouring him ourselves, it were for his service to do it. Saint Paul wished to become anathema himself, so he could thereby save his brethren the Jews; but this was an impossible case, put only to express the fervour of his zeal.

For the readiest way to make others virtuous is to become so ourselves, that we may draw them by example and sympathy to follow us: on the other hand, we cannot pursue the real benefit of our neighbour in any instance without strengthening our own Charity, and advancing our own interests.

15. The main hindrance obstructing our progress in the love of God arises from the narrowness of our notions: we are ready enough to love those that are good, but very short and imperfect is our idea of goodness, which we conceive to consist in a constant indulgence of our desires. Children are more apt to love servants who humour them in everything, and persons contributing to their pleasures, than their parents, how well soever convinced of their parental care and judgment: and while we continue such Children as to fix our hearts upon present pleasures, without thought or concern for those at a distance, we cannot love God, nor have we any inducement to do it; for he is indeed not good in our sense of the word, being severe and inexorable to every desire that would do us mischief.

Therefore we must learn first to change the state of our desires, inuring them to fix strongly upon distant advantage, and must strive to enlarge our views so as to take in remotest consequences; that we may give every good and evil its just weight in our estimation, whether nearer or afar off. If we could bring desire to take this turn, we should find God indulgent thereto, having provided us many means of innocent pleasure and present gratification, but requiring no self-denial from us that does not tend to our greater enjoyment at some other time. And though there be evils incident to human life from external causes, which we do not see the expedience of, yet are there blessings and comforts enow to overbalance them: so that if we take our view completely and fairly, we shall see so many more luminous spots than dark ones, as to render the whole an exhilarating prospect. This is not difficult to be done in a situation of ease and security: persons living in health, plenty, and pleasure, beholding everything cheerful about them, if they ever think of a disposing Providence at all, must have a very untoward temper of mind not to acknowledge a goodness and bounty therein, notwithstanding some troubles and distresses in places whither they never resort. But when severe pains, afflictions, and crosses fall upon ourselves, the pressure of them will inevitably contract our prospect within our own compass: it will then be too late to look for marks of goodness in anything that does not contribute to our immediate relief, nor can we form an idea of it unless from persuasions inculcated strongly in our minds before.

Wherefore it behoves us to provide against a rainy day while the sun shines, and in our seasons of prosperity to lay in such a stock of persuasion as may stand us in stead in time of trial, so intimately rooted in our minds as not to be torn up by the storms of adversity. It is not enough to join in with the general voice, nor abound in professions of the divine goodness, nor stifle every thought that would suggest a doubt: this is only a flattery of God, a covering over the sore and deceiving ourselves, nor will afford us comfort when we want it most. For persuasion is not to be gotten by rote, nor can an inward sentiment be produced by forced expressions, which only give us the credit in our own opinion of believing what we really do not believe: to be hearty and durable it must proceed from a full and impartial conviction of our reason. This is best effected when the understanding is clear and the thoughts at ease, when we can look around us calmly and make our judgment not solely upon the circumstances of our present situation: then is our time to settle the true idea of goodness upon such mature and thorough consideration, as that it may abide without changing colours ever afterwards; to observe what marks of it may be gathered from experience, and discern its consistence with some temporary displeasures.

The existence of evil has been the grand stumbling-block in all ages; had we fewer blessings, but never anything to cross or disturb us, we should be content: let us then consider the evils as so many deductions from the good, and if our sources of enjoyment be so copious as that the balance remaining after these deductions be equal in quantity to what would have satisfied us if given alone, why cannot we be satisfied as well with both taken together? For a number of conveniences and delights, attended with some toil and suffering, are deemed more desirable than a little pleasure that may be had without any trouble at all: as a large estate, subject to taxes, repairs, cares of management, and vexations by bad tenants, appears preferable in the eye of the world to a small annuity constantly paid upon demand.

But we are apt to imagine that Omnipotence might have given us the same blessings without the mixture of evil appendant thereto, or making it the necessary passage to them: this, for aught we know, might have been done in the original constitution of univeral nature, which was the work of God in his character of Creator, wherein he stands far above the reach of our faculties, nor is it possible for us to discern what rules or measures it was fit for him to be guided by. We shall do best to take things as they are constituted, to contemplate him in his Person or Character of Governor, ordering all things in perfect wisdom, goodness, and equity, according to their natures and relations established before from everlasting, laying out every event in his plan so as to yield the greatest profit to the whole, and providing that each individual shall share in the good of the whole. Could we once thoroughly convince ourselves of these points upon rational grounds, by the evidences suggested in former parts of this work, or what others may occur to our observation; and could we bring ourselves to a habit of estimating things by the whole line of their consequences, and learn to value an evil productive of much greater good, though we might still fall deficient in our idea of infinite goodness through the imperfection of our conceptions, yet we should have sense and apprehension of goodness enough to be the object of our cordial dependence and unfeigned adoration.

16. We have seen in § 11, how the contentions and competitions, unavoidable in our transactions with the world, often tend to abate our Charity to one another: and I have endeavoured to point out the remedy for preventing that

effect, by deducing our rules of private prudence and self-defence from the general good, and holding that derivation constantly in view when we practise them; which will still leave us inclination to do as many kind offices to the party opposed as are not inconsistent therewith. But there is another abatement made by a false delicacy we too often contract, which gives us a contempt and loathing of persons whose appearance, taste, and manners are very different from our own. If we dislike a man's face, if his dress be shabby, his deportment clownish, his language rude, his ideas gross, or any vicious mixture in his character, we can scarce prevail upon ourselves to wish him anything good, or think him capable of enjoying a real pleasure, because those he seems to delight in are utterly unsuitable to our relish.

This turn of mind we are not formed with by nature, but drawn into by education as a preservative against catching habits and desires, that would be unbecoming and mischievous: for it being natural to imitate what one likes, and avoid what one abhors, we teach our children an aversion to the manners and sentiments of the vulgar and ignorant, to prevent their being led into the like by their example; and a contempt of the brutes and their ways of living, to take off their attention from sordid and grovelling employments or pleasures. Thus we are forced to excite an antipathy, to ward off the pernicious effects of sympathy, that might otherwise ensue: for young and inexperienced minds cannot easily make a distinct estimation of the persons and of the practices, nor pick out the good and bad parts in a character, nor discern the force of propriety, which renders the same things bad in one place that were good and commendable in another.

Therefore this method of dealing with them is prudent and necessary, until a better can be taken by gradually showing them the reasons, relations, and differences of things, together with the rudiments and cautions founded thereupon: which though I apprehend possible in theory to be done, and would certainly be preferable, yet cannot be practised by the generality of parents and teachers, who must be left to go by rule, and rote, and custom, because they know none other way to go by. Nevertheless, when we come to some maturity of judgment and reflection, we may learn to walk without those go-carts which were necessary to support our infant steps, to be sensible of pleasures which would be none to us, to see the fitness of things in other circumstances of condition, which would be highly pernicious and unbecoming in ours, to weigh the several ingredients of a character apart, and to distinguish between the person and the sentiments or practices, so as to escape the influence of sympathy from the one, without aid of antipathy to the other.

For surely one may see the joy a hog receives by wallowing in the mire, without wishing to roll with him one's self; or contemplate a multitude of flies frisking about and regaling luxuriously upon cow-dung, without either desiring to partake of the repast, or feeling our stomachs turn at the filthiness of their taste; for those appetites are perfections in their natures which would be depravations in ours, and the materials for gratifying them are valuable blessings to them, though they are troubles and annoyances to us. In like manner we may perceive a real enjoyment in the diversions and coarse merriment of the vulgar, though we find no relish in ourselves for the like; an expedience in their sentiments and manners, which would prove hurtful and unsuitable to us. We may admire the robustness of the porter, the intrepidity and heartiness of the common sailor, the hardiness of a house-breaker or poacher capable of enduring all weathers unconcernedly, without wanting to acquire those qualities by the same methods. We may regard vice as a loath-

some disease, detestable in itself but not exciting a detestation of the patient; for whom we may still retain a tenderness and what degree of esteem he deserves, while we keep him at a distance for fear of taking the infection: for in almost every character and every form of being, we may find something well worth our purchase if it were to be bought with money, though we should not be willing to exchange conditions upon the whole.

By such observations and reflections we may in time clear ourselves from the remains of the school-boy, a fierceness and strangeness of temper, an aversion and contempt of everything not exactly suited to our own ways: which while it lasts must make us unequitable, partial in our judgments, incapable of acknowledging anything good or valuable elsewhere, and consequently indisposed to give God his glory. For a sincere and hearty honour can spring only from the largeness of his bounty; but we shall have no sense of any in the greatest part of the creation appearing wretched and despicable in our eye, where the scene of happiness will stand confined to a very few of our own acquaintance who happen to hit our taste, as being persons of good humour or good breeding, that have seen the world and are orthodox.

17. Were men apprized how many good fruits are the natural produce of a thorough Charity, they would be more careful to cultivate it, and suffer no delicacy or prejudice of education and custom to stint its growth. It would be superfluous to expatiate upon the benefits resulting from this principle, if it were to prevail in general among mankind; for they must occur to any one who will deign to bestow a thought upon the subject: there would be no war, nor injury, nor cozenage, nor contention, nor fear, nor suspicion, nor waste, nor idleness, nor perversity, nor fond indulgence; unexperienced innocence would find an easy instruction everywhere: natural appetite be withholden from warping with a tender gentle hand, and the earth restored to her paradisiacal state. But this is a romantic imagination which we can never expect to see verified in fact: or if it were, Charity would then become not a virtue, nor scarcely a science: for there is no difficulty in knowing how to behave where everybody behaves friendly, and the sweets of such a conduct all around us must raise a pressing appetite and draw us into it whether we will or no.

Therefore our business in this state of imperfection and trial lies in learning how to preserve our Charity entire amidst an uncharitable world, to retain our good-will while forced by necessity or prudence to act contrary thereto, to accommodate it to the usages and circumstances about us, and render it feasible in practice rather than plausible in theory. Yet the introduction of an Utopian state may be our aim without being our expectation; and what little approaches we can make in the progress towards it, will be an advantage well worth our gaining. For so far as mutual good-will and communion of interests obtains in any little society, or among a few persons, it creates a mutual trust and confidence, relieves them from the necessity of guarding against encroachments by one another, enables them, by their joint endeavours, to strike out more lights and procure themselves more conveniences and pleasures, than they could have done singly; and answers all the same purposes, though in a far lower degree, as if it were general throughout the species.

Neither is a sincere Charity unprofitable to a man's self, though it were to meet with no returns in kind: for it enlarges the understanding, purifies the mental eye, and clears the judgment. Most of our errors arise from a narrow partiality to our own interests and humours; for we do not see

things in the same light when the case is our own as in another's. If my hogs break into my neighbour's corn, it is an accident, and such things ought not to be minded between friends: but if his hogs break into mine, then the case is altered, for he ought to have yoked them, and it is but reasonable that he should pay for his negligence. But to those whom we heartily love, we shall heartily wish well, and judge as favourably in their case as in our own: and if we bore a sincere goodwill to our fellow-creatures as such, we should judge equitably upon them all, regarding solely the merits of the cause without respect to the difference of persons; and this would teach us an impartiality and calmness in matters relating to ourselves.

It is commonly said that a stander-by sees more of the game than he that plays, because the passions of the player are interested, which raises an eagerness that blinds his judgment: and for the like reason many people can give better advice than they can follow; for our concern for another proceeds from reason and good nature, passion has no share in it, therefore we can often see clearer into his affairs than we can in our own. If we could inure ourselves to take concern in the evils befalling others, and seek for alleviations and comforts with the same heartiness as for ourselves, we should find them more readily than we could in our own case: because we should not have the pungency of the smart to confuse our ideas, and prevent reflection from taking its full and fair scope: we might then weigh the value of distant good in a just balance, see its desirableness, and acknowledge a present pain eligible that works out a greater advantage: we should be more at leisure and better qualified to examine what benefits may result from a suffering, and be able to find a spice of comfort even in probabilities.

As the mind is more ready to hope well for those to whom we wish well, and quicker in remarking the success of persons in whose enjoyments we can sympathize, we might learn a greater facility in augurating for the best, without that anxiety and dread which seizes us upon but just possible dangers hanging over ourselves, and should discern a much more copious flood of the divine bounty than the selfish and narrow-minded can ever conceive. For we can judge more calmly upon hurts we see than those we feel, and in them can acknowledge, that since evils must fall somewhere, it is not harder they should fall where they do, than elsewhere. By practice of this sort, and the habit of sympathizing with the good and ill successes of others, we may learn to estimate for ourselves from the manner wherein we have been used to estimate for them; we may be convinced that what was right and equitable for them was the same for us, and what was eligible for them was so to us: which would prevent our murmuring at being called upon to bear our share of the general burden, would give a lively feeling sense of remote good in the midst of present uneasiness, enable us to bear it patiently, help to support us in dangers, and teach us more willingly to undergo the same discipline and wholesome severities we have exacted from others in kindness and sincere regard to their benefit.

Perhaps it may be thought that some enmity, contention, and selfishness is necessary in the world, to find us employment and keep our activity alive; for more than half the business of life lies in guarding against the attacks and encroachments of one another: and it is observable, that when people come into a situation of perfect ease and security, with nothing ever to vex or ruffle them, they quickly rust in idleness. This may be too true, as mankind is constituted, yet does not render it needful for a man to nourish

ill humours in his own breast, to make work for himself and neighbours; for there will not want employment of that sort from the unreasonableness of others: be his Charity ever so perfect and diffusive, he will never, with all his endeavours and all the force of example and sympathy, bring an equitable disposition to prevail so generally, but there will still be unruly passions and greediness enough in the world to keep vigilance awake, and prevent activity from stagnating.

Nor need he fear the consequences, if it were possible to make Charity universal: the reason why it does not suffice to fill up our time is because in single persons at best it is imperfect, languid, unenlightened, confined, too feeble to act without aid of some other motive, and often degenerates into weakness: but were it general, it would become manly, judicious, discerning, habitual, and vigorous, engaging of itself, and expert in finding ways of exercising it. For by joining assistance we might improve one another's lights, far beyond what each of us can do singly, so as never to be at a loss how to proceed: and by mutual example and sympathy, we should strengthen our propensity to act for the best, so as never to want an incitement to do what appeared beneficial.

There is industry enough in quantity among mankind to answer all the purposes of life, but the greater part is misemployed in mischief or thrown away upon trifles; and that earnestness of desire which gives vigour to it, is generally derived from custom: a single person cannot so easily raise a liking by his own efforts as multitudes can draw others after them. Therefore were Charity and fellow-feeling to be the prevailing humour in the world, it would become fashionable and engaging to ride as many miles upon a public service as after a stinking fox; to bestow as much pains and contrivance upon the good and pleasure of others, as upon raising a name, or breeding race-horses, or procuring curiosities, or pursuing our own fantastic schemes. This would turn industry into its proper channel, where it would not overflow to make waste and do mischief, nor be lost among the barren sands of whimsy; but run all to the uses of mankind, employed in watering and cleansing, to quicken the growth of good works, and clear away those obstructions of fear, impatience, indolence, and indulgence, which disable us from pursuing our real advantages.

Thus whether we consider mankind in general, or societies, or particular persons, the virtues mutually aid, support, and nourish one another: Charity which is built firmest upon Faith and Prudence, improves them again in return, opens wider scenes of the divine beneficence to enlarge our Hope, encourages Fortitude and Temperance, and inspires an equitable temper and impartial justice to all; it eradicates vanity, clears the judgment, perfects discretion, and animates industry; it insures peace of mind with self satisfaction, and makes us find immediate pleasure in contributing to the general good wherein our own is contained, thus advancing our interests effectually without holding them perpetually in contemplation.

CHAP. XVIII.

OUR NEIGHBOUR.

WHOEVER throws aside his reason, when he takes the Bible in hand, is like to make very little profit thereby: for the written word, I conceive, was not designed to supersede the use of reason, but to assist and put it into

the right track for arriving at a sound judgment upon things of the utmost importance. This is particularly manifest in that passage, where we are instructed in the duty of Charity towards our Neighbour: which being propounded as one of the two great commandments whereon hang all the law and the prophets, it was asked, But who is my neighbour? Had the mind of the person making this question been clear and open, it would have suggested to him the proper answer, Every fellow-creature to whom I stand in a capacity of doing a kindness: but it seems his judgment had been darkened by some narrow prejudices, which to remove was all that was wanted: therefore the right answer was not dictated as from the chair of authority, but a case put which might naturally lead him to make it for himself. A certain man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among thieves, who stripped him of all he had, and left him naked and wounded upon the road: a priest, and afterwards a Levite, coming that way, looked on him and passed by on the other side; but a Samaritan, seeing his distress, alighted, poured oil into his wounds, set him on his own beast, and carried him to the inn, where he provided that all necessary care should be taken of him. Which of these was neighbour to him that fell among thieves? He that showed mercy to him. Then go thou and do likewise.

Now if we understand this parable literally, and confine ourselves to the direct and primary import of the words, it will teach us that a man becomes neighbour to another by doing him a service, nor stands in that relation to any to whom he has never been helpful; and the moral of it will be, that we ought to relieve the distressed for our own sakes, in order to become entitled to the offices of a good neighbour from them: an inference which how much it would redound to the honour of the teacher or improvement of the learner, I leave to every man's common sense to determine. But Jesus knew the person he had to deal with would put no such construction upon his words; for his natural lights would show him that neighbourhood must arise from the situation wherein men stand with respect to one another, not from their manner of conducting themselves therein; and is correlative, so that no man can be neighbour to another without the other being likewise neighbour to him. Therefore the wounded traveller, by the circumstance of his distress, was really placed in as near a degree of neighbourhood to the priest and the Levite as the Samaritan, though the latter only approved himself a neighbour by acting agreeably to that character, and was therefore proposed as a pattern for any who desire to fulfil the duties of good neighbourhood.

And the case of a Jew and a Samaritan was chosen to show the relation the more comprehensive, for the Samaritans were regarded as schismatics, they had set up mount Gerizim for the place where God's name was to be worshipped in opposition to Sion, therefore there was as much hatred and detestation between them and the Jews, as religious feuds can inspire. I hope we can find nothing similar in our own times to illustrate by, but must take our idea from history, and may imagine their animosity as great as between a Jesuit and a Hugonot, a high Churchman and a Presbyterian of the last century. If then a Samaritan, a schismatic, a fanatical dog, an open enemy to God and his true Church, nevertheless be neighbour to an orthodox Jew when in want of each other's assistance, surely the same relation must subsist between every two human creatures upon earth in the like situation.

2. The term neighbour was the properest to distinguish the object of our

good offices, because it arises from situation, not from personal character: a brother must always continue such wherever he goes, nor is it possible for any one who was not born of the same parents, to become a brother afterwards; but there is a possibility that any person, however remote, may come to live at the next door. Therefore our Charity must be universal, our disposition and good-will extend alike to all, because else there might be some who could never come into a situation entitling them to receive the effects of it, and we might possibly have a neighbour to whom we should owe no duties of good neighbourhood: but our immediate attention and exercises of Charity must stand confined by our opportunities, for where we can do no service, there and there only we owe none, yet we may still retain a good will, though without power of rendering it effectual.

And here it will not be foreign to my principal design, that of harmonizing Reason and Revelation, to observe how well this doctrine tallies with that deduced by the light of nature in the First Volume, and explained in the first Chapter of this, where it appears that we are citizens of the universe, interested in all the good and evil befalling therein; therefore our good wishes are primarily due to the whole, and our first aim ought to be placed upon advancing the general stock of happiness. But we are too inconsiderable creatures to do anything for general service: our powers are small, our activity confined by time and place within a very narrow compass, which obliges us to contract our aim to points that we can reach. For since the good of the whole is made up of the aggregate of good among individuals, we shall contribute towards the one by every little addition we can make to the other: from whence it follows, that every perceptive creature, as being fellow-citizen of the same Universe, that falls within the sphere of our good offices, or in Scripture language becomes our neighbour, is the proper object of our endeavours.

But small as our powers are, they may affect more than one person, nor is neighbourhood so confined as to include none but him that lives at the next door: since then we may have several neighbours at the same time, we must not be so intent upon our duties to one, as to overlook all the rest. If my neighbour desires me to join with him in a concert of French horns, were I able I should be willing to oblige him; but if I knew the noise would disturb the whole street, it were more neighbourly upon the whole to refuse him: or if he would project a building over my ground, that must prove an annoyance to others, I shall be a bad neighbour if I do not oppose him.

Neither does our duty to our neighbour exclude all regard to our own interest, but puts both upon an equal footing; for we are members of that neighbourhood whose interests we are to cultivate, parts of that Whole whose advantages we are to pursue: we are commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves, not better than ourselves, nor solely, so as to reserve none for our own use. Hence, as observed in the Chapter above cited, the general rule parts into two main branches, Prudence and Benevolence, called in sacred style the wisdom of the serpent and innocence of the dove: the former prompts to hinder another from encroaching upon our share of happiness, the other withholds us from making encroachments upon his, for an encroachment on either side diminishes the common stock alike. Therefore in our dealings with another, we are to regard his good indifferently with our own, and take the course that will yield most of it to either; and in our transactions affecting several, we are to pursue those measures from whence the greater profit will redound upon the balance among the whole.

3. This it is which justifies all allowable contentions, oppositions, punishments, and severities, and recommends all laudable self-denials: for though these things are unneighbourly or unnatural, if we consider only their present effect upon the party suffering by them, yet we must remember that the public and other persons, besides those with whom we have immediate intercourse, are our neighbours whenever their interests will be affected by what we do; and we ourselves each of us make one of the neighbourhood, which will be advantaged by a trouble or inconvenience brought upon any part of it for the greater benefit of the whole, or of any other part. Yet still the neighbourhood is not dissolved between us and any whom we find just cause to afflict, but is overpowered by the stronger obligation of doing a greater good to some other parts of the neighbourhood; the force of it subsists entire notwithstanding the contrary attraction, as the force of gravitation continues to act upon a plummet though you pull upwards with a string, and will draw it down again the moment you let go your hand: so that competitors, enemies, and persecutors do not cease to be our neighbours, but remain entitled to the benefit of that relation at intervals whenever our duty to others who stand in as near relation, will permit.

Nor is it necessary in every case of contention and severity, to have an immediate discernment of the benefits resulting therefrom: for it may be justified by rules prevailing among mankind, which carry a presumption of having been founded upon a necessity or expedience we may not be able to discern: but then to give them that presumption, they must be rules of judgment and sobriety, not of passion or arbitrary custom, and taken upon authority of the discreet and intelligent, not of the giddy and the impetuous.

But if a neighbourhood be so large as that there can be little intercourse among them all, it is convenient for the benefit of all to distribute into little clans, among whom there may be a closer attachment, and more continual commerce of good offices: in forming of which under societies, they will have respect to characters, qualifications, old acquaintance, convenience of situation, and other circumstances, rendering them more apt to join together for mutual emolument or pleasure. And if it be proper for some one or more of them to take order in matters of general concern, each will give him all the assistance and deference requisite for the better performance of his charge.

For we ought never to forget that we are sensitivo-rational animals, governed partly by appetite, habit, custom, appearance, and all the family of imagination, and but partly by reason: nor can the latter faculty work her purposes half so effectually as when aided by the other. Were each man to attach himself to the services of a stranger, one of different manners and character, whom he had no other inducement to oblige than being a fellow-creature, he could not proceed with the same vigour and heartiness as when prompted by natural affection, inclination, mutual convenience, or general custom and approbation.

Nor could he join so industriously under those who have the care of public services, upon the single view of their being public services, without a due respect for authority and sense of obligation to stimulate him. So that there would be fewer benefits done and received among mankind, and good neighbourhood must suffer, if we were to depend upon reason alone and not press the inferior powers of our nature into her service: but the inferior powers will not always come upon call, therefore we must employ

them when they are to be had, and put reason upon such work wherein she may have the benefit of their services.

Thus the duties of particular relations, connections, and stations, grow out of a due regard to good neighbourhood, because it will be best promoted by paying a just attention to them. Hence it follows that, whenever things are so circumstanced as that the prosecution of those duties would manifestly carry us contrary to the general good, they are superseded, and we must hate father and mother, wife and children, in comparison of that universal body whereof we are members; but whenever this case does not happen, as it very rarely does happen, every one is our nearest neighbour, in proportion as we stand best qualified and situated, as well with respect to our inward disposition and powers, as to common opinions and usages, to serve him most effectually and heartily: and when equal benefits come into competition, the nearer neighbour always deserves preference before the more remote.

4. Therefore it is an unjust cavil that has been raised against the Gospel by some who pretend that it does not inculcate all the moral duties, because it has omitted to give any precepts upon Friendship. For we have just now seen that love to the neighbourhood will incline us to encourage those affections which may give a spring to our endeavours in acts of kindness, and the more ties wherewith we are obligated to any, the nearer he stands in proximity to us: so that it is impossible for any man, who is truly charitable or a good neighbour, in the Scripture sense of the terms, even to prove a treacherous, an uncertain, or a bad friend, because all social duties are implied and virtually contained in that general precept called the second great commandment. But so it may be said likewise that he, who fulfils this commandment, cannot possibly be a bad husband, or a bad father, or son, or master, or servant, or subject; nevertheless, it was found necessary to give particular injunctions for all those stations: was it not then an oversight that the duties of friendship were omitted?

To this may be answered, that other connections are general, taking place among the vulgar, the ignorant, the selfish, the perverse, and persons of all denominations and characters: they are cast upon us by nature, or entered into for necessity or convenience, and men would be tempted continually to violate them if not restrained by rules and injunctions. But true friendship subsists only among a few persons of good character and refined sentiments, which will direct them sufficiently how to perform the functions of it: it is a tie of choice, not of nature or situation, and the exercises of it flow spontaneously from the relish found in them: so there is no occasion to drive him that will lead, for precept and obligation are wholly superfluous in matters whereto the heart is prompted by inclination; they could have none other effect than to make a task and burden of that which was a pleasure before. It is true, a friend ought to stand ranked among the nearest of our neighbours; but this consideration serves only to justify our particular attachment to him, and our giving scope to the impulses of friendship to take their natural effect upon our actions.

But it will be asked, have there not been fickle, unfaithful friends? are they not blemishes in society, deserving a caution and direction to prevent others from following their example? I grant there are frequent misbehaviours in those common connections and intimacies which the world dignifies with the name of friendship: and so are there frequent infidelities, dissimulations, and inconstancies, amongst lovers; yet I never heard it objected against the Gospel, that there are no rules of duty laid down for

our conduct in courtship. For affection and passion require rules of restraint, more than those for keeping up their fervour without abatement: had particular injunctions been given for this purpose, they could not have been so clearly framed, as not to be perpetually misunderstood, and do more hurt in the world than benefit.

What multitudes of novels are spread abroad, all aiming to inculcate the indispensable duty of constancy? and what effect have they had upon the minds of the boys and girls who study them? Constancy is certainly a virtue and a praise; but what is constancy in their apprehension? nothing but an inflexible obstinacy of attachment to whatever happens to hit their fancy, against all reason, and prudence, and advice. How much more impenetrably would they be armed against remonstrances by the sanction of Religion, had it been written, And thou shalt be constant in love, for this is the third great commandment like unto the two former. But the Gospel has strongly inculcated the duties of honesty, sincerity, and fidelity in our dealings, of equitableness in our thoughts, and words, and actions, or practising the golden rule to do as we would be done by, to weigh the pleasures, the rights, and advantages, the disappointments, vexations, and damage of others in the same balance wherein we would weigh our own: and our own reason and common sense, if we consult them, will instruct us how to apply those general rules to particular cases in love or friendship, without overlooking our other duties to the world, to our parents, to our children yet unborn, to our other neighbours, and to ourselves.

If friendship had been made a duty, the world might still have remained liable to gross mistakes concerning the thing which is the object of that duty: for where shall we find an exact and steady definition of friendship? the learned have been greatly divided upon this head, some having laid down rules for our conduct therein which others have condemned. Nor is this to be wondered at, for indeed there are very various sorts and degrees of friendship, so that the same rules cannot be applicable to all, but what are proper cautions in one, would be justly blameable in another: particularly that ascribed to bias, which directs us to behave with a friend, as if we knew he would one day become an enemy.

Were there any determinate fixed idea of friendship, we might expect to find it in Cicero's treatise upon that subject, entitled Lœlius: but how vague, how desultory, how fluctuating are his notions! First he tells you, upon the authority of the Philosophers, that friendship can subsist only among the good, but none is good except the perfect Wise-man, an ideal character, which never really existed upon earth. This he thinks too strict and rigid, therefore by good or wise would have such understood whose lives have been exemplary for fidelity, integrity, equity, and generosity, exempt from all tincture of greediness, inordinate desire, or intemperance of passion, uniform and steady in their conduct, like Fabricius, Curius, and Caruncanius: and explains friendship to be nothing else than a perfect harmony of sentiment, as well with respect to religious matters as those relating to human life. It is easy to see into what narrow compass this description both of the subjects and essence of friendship must contract it: and accordingly he takes notice that in history one can scarce pick out three or four pair of true friends, to which he hopes in future times Scipio and Lœlius will be added for another. Nor can it escape our observation, of how little use it would be to mankind to enjoin a virtue which can take place in so few instances, and which persons of the character

above described will run into of their own accord, without direction or exhortation.

Nevertheless, in other places of the same treatise he changes his note, representing friendship as a common and easy thing: so common as to be found everywhere, and so easy as to be understood and admired by everybody. For, says he, friendship is the only thing in human life whose value all join with one voice in acknowledging: virtue has been run down by many as mere arrogance and ostentation; many despise riches, as believing contentment better had with a little; honours which set the desires of some in a flame are by many accounted nothing but bubble and emptiness; in like manner, whatever other things have their respective admirers, appear wholly worthless in the eyes of multitudes. But upon friendship all men unite in the same opinion: those who apply their thoughts to public affairs, those who delight in the secrets of nature and treasures of learning, those who attend only to the management of their private concerns, even those who make pleasure their sole study; all agree that there is no living without friendship, if one wishes to have any enjoyment of life. For friendship somehow finds means to insinuate itself into the characters of all men, nor will suffer any scheme of life to be carried on without it. Nay, if there be any of so morose and savage a temper as to resemble Timon of Athens, the man-hater, yet such a one could not bear to be without a friend, in whose bosom he might disburden his spleen.

After this changeable description given by the most accurate and eloquent hand, we may guess what idea the generality must entertain of friendship: and indeed if we observe the common discourses of mankind, we shall find a friend to be one we frequently visit, who is our boon companion, or joins with us in our pleasures and diversions, or encourages us in our business, or unites in the same scheme, or votes the same way at an election, or is our patron or dependent, who we hope will help us in rising to preferment or increasing our interest. Such attachments are apt to grow but too violent of themselves, making men partial, passionate, unjust to others who are not their friends, and regardless of the common weal, or of what mischief they do in their zeal for those they favour, and need curbing rather than encouraging by the sanction of a lawgiver. Lœlius himself acknowledges the evils of them, and produces a flagrant instance which happened within his own knowledge; for in a court of judicature, where he sat upon the bench, one Blosius was examined as having been an accomplice with Tiberius Gracchus in some seditious practices: the man pleaded in justification, that he had so great a veneration for Gracchus, he thought himself bound to do anything he desired. What! says the judge, if he had bid you fire the Capitol, would you have done it? Yes, replied he, I should have believed it my duty.

Thus we see to what lengths of frenzy the duty of fidelity to a friend, preached up incessantly among the Romans, could carry a man: but what if Blosius had been a zealous Christian, and had found it recorded that Jesus, upon one asking him, What shall I do to be saved, had answered, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself; thou shalt be constant in love, and true to thy friend; for these are the four great commandments whereon hang all the law and the prophets. This would have brought religious zeal to join in with partiality to his friend, and prepared him to suffer martydom in the cause of party and faction.

But ought we not then to be true to our friend? assuredly: common honour and common sense, if we have any, will prompt us to a fidelity, an obligingness, a warmth in his interests, according to the nature and degree of the friendship; but the written word was not given to instruct us in matters that reason can so easily discern by her own lights. Therefore we have cause to be thankful that our teacher has been silent upon this article, because his authority was not wanted for such as would be disposed to obey it, and would have been perverted to mischievous purposes by the violent and unwary.

CHAP. XIX.

DIVINE ECONOMY.

HAVING found, both from Religion and Philosophy, that universal Charity towards God and his creatures is the grand Cardinal virtue, the hinge whereon all the others turn, the end wherein they ought to terminate, let us endeavour to trace out some footsteps of the divine economy in the administration of this world: wherein it may appear by what gradual approaches God has been pleased to lead mankind towards a sound understanding of himself, and an openness of heart to one another. And this will oblige us to re-handle a subject we have already taken into consideration before; for Providence, I must own, is a favourite topic with me, and I am fond of setting it in every various light that may help to make it more clearly and more generally understood.

In my XXVth Chap. bearing that title [Vol. 1, p. 517 of this edition], I have taken pains to show that all events without exception, small as well as great, must take rise from their adequate causes, provided in certain knowledge and purpose of every particular effect they should bring forth. This being an esoteric doctrine, inconvenient and unfit for common use, which requires a distinction to be made between things providential and others that are not, I have appropriated the VIth Chapter of the second Volume to mark out that distinction, and render the wisdom and contrivance running throughout the works of nature apparent to common apprehensions. But here still remains another field of inquiry into the scheme of polity governing mankind, and measures of conduct respecting the moral world, wherein we may take our ideas directly from experience, without making other use of speculation than to direct and model our observations into a regular plan. This may be called not so much a theory as a history of Providence; of which I purpose in this Chapter to attempt an imperfect sketch. I say sketch, for a complete history would require uncommon abilities, an extensive knowledge of the world in all ages and countries, and a piercing sagacity to follow the lines of Wisdom throughout all their intricate windings.

But it is the custom of Providence to perfect mighty works by a multitude of weak and unpromising instruments, each performing a small and several part of the whole: for we are none of us wholly insignificant when doing our best, because that best is always the whole of our share towards completing the great design. Therefore I may safely presume that my talents are sufficient for the sphere I am to act in: it is my business to fill up the sphere, that there may be no vacancies left through my negligence; and if I can make my drawings visible, with something of a shape, con

nexion, and symmetry in them, shall think I have done great matters. Perhaps the coarse draught may stimulate and furnish hints to some abler master to produce a fuller, more striking, likeness of the glorious original, which may gain the admiration of everybody, and do more extensive service than I am capable of. In these hopes I shall enter upon my undertaking without diffidence, as liable to no hazard of a disappointment, because having no expectations, and being assured that the Disposer of gifts has enabled every man to do as much as was wanted from him on every present occasion.

2. When we reflect on the boundless extent of Omnipotence, having all substances at command, and all manners of affecting them, there is no doubt that God might have distributed what portion and kinds of happiness he thought proper to his creatures, without making any preparation of subjects or materials to bring them suitable to one another; nor that he might have excited sensations, ideas, and intelligence, either permanent, unfading, and unsatiating, or in continually varying successions, by his own immediate act, without employing any material or other channel to convey them. But experience of all around us testifies, that he has chosen to work his purposes by the contrivances of wisdom rather than the operations of power.

He could have rained us food from heaven, ready fitted for our palate and digestion; but he has given fertility to the earth, skill and industry to man, to draw from thence by long toil and patience the corn and other provisions for our sustenance. He could have moulded the human frame at once from the dust of the earth in full stature and maturity, with sufficient knowledge to name all the beasts of the field according to their respective natures; but he has cast us into the world in helpless infancy, growing through many stages of imbecility and ignorance up to perfect manhood. In like manner he could have fully peopled the earth, as easily as make an Adam, by a single act of creation; inspired into them arts and sciences, good polity, judgment, experience, and sound Religion, together with the breath of life; but we may learn from ancient records, that there has been an infancy of the world as well of particular persons, a gradual progress of knowledge human and divine; and though we have not yet seen it arrive to full maturity, we may discern it approaching slowly thereto, by the advancement of learning applied to useful purposes: the daily decrease of savageness, barbarism, and superstition, the spreading intercourse among nations, familiarizing them with one another, and the growing sinews of commerce tending to knit the whole into one body, and complete the perfect manhood of a paradisiacal state.

3. We were born into the world selfish and sensitive, having no regard for any other creatures, nor for anything beyond the present calls of appetite: and if we had been planted like trees always to grow each in his several spot, receiving our nourishment from the ground beneath us, our pleasures and pains continually from the sun, the air, the rains, and the dews, we should never have had a thought reaching further than ourselves, or than the present moment. But God has been pleased to endue us with remembrance and observation to discern the influence of the past upon the present, and the present upon the future; which leads us gradually into a degree of forecast, prudence, and reason. He has likewise given us the powers of motion and organs of speech, by which we may have intercourse among one another; and has sown the seeds of wants and desires, whereby we are drawn to become mutually helpful for supplying the one and gratifying the other. This first opens the heart a little beyond itself and begins our concern for others, generating love, instinct, and friendship: for I have

shown, in the Chapter on the Passions, that those affections are the products of wisdom, not the gifts of power, being no more born with us than speech; but our organs are so constituted and suited to receive the action of external objects as to lead us naturally into them, without any more need of pains and cultivation than to hasten their growth.

He has given us moreover the faculty of imagination, which when stored with variety of associations and trains, can furnish an entertainment of its own from objects that do not touch the sensitive appetites; and as we grow up, can find employment for more of our time than they do; for hunger and thirst, and the pleasures of sensation, engage us only now and then, but habit, fancy, amusement, curiosity, novelty, and other movements of imagination, occupy the most of our hours. This renders us sociable, and makes us taste an immediate pleasure in company, where we do not expect assistance in our wants and desires: for the trains of thought in other persons bearing a similitude with our own, their conversation and motions attract us by sympathy, and lead our imagination more easily and in greater variety of windings than the scenes of inanimate objects around us can do. Were a child to be kept always alone from its birth, it would never want company, because having never experienced the pleasures of it; but if one of us was shut up by himself for a while, he would grow melancholy and dull, his spirits languid, and his thoughts stagnating; and if he could only see a number of people from his window, among whom there appeared something of business and bustle going forward, it would give a lift to his spirits, and briskness to his ideas. Therefore we are not born sociable creatures, nor have an innate propensity to converse of any kind; but are placed in such circumstances by nature, and endued with such capacities as will lead us into it insensibly.

4. But imagination is more strongly affected with scenes expressive of passion and emotion, than those that are calm and placid: this I take it is what makes boys generally unlucky, and those of the sprightliest temper are commonly fullest of mischief; because being unable to bear the sight of every thing languid around them, they can raise more stir by vexing than by doing service. Therefore their mischief is not malice, but fondness for something that may engage their attention; for when they first meet together they are pleased with one another's company, but not having learned the art of keeping up their pleasures of conversation, they begin to play unlucky tricks with each other, merely for want of better employment: and for the like reason they throw stones at people, because they can put them thereby into a greater flutter than by any thing else they could do. Or if they have not an opportunity of seeing the vexation occasioned by the pranks they play, still they can enjoy the thought of it; and will break a window slily, hide a workman's tool, or fasten up his door, for sake of the fancy of how much he will fret and fume when he comes to discover the roguery. Nor are our vulgar much better than overgrown boys in this particular; for if they can get into a fine garden, it is fun to them to break off an ornament, or disfigure a statue, or make any spoil they think will give much disturbance; and they find a supreme delight in teazing an idiot, a deformed person, or a foreigner, that has the ill luck to fall in their way.

But it is not the engagingness of mischief alone that makes us hurtful to one another; our very wants and desires, which first bring us together, have a tendency likewise to dissociate us: for the same materials of gratification being wanted by several, and that selfishness which is our first principle of action prompting each to appropriate them to himself, this gives rise to

competitions, contentions, jealousies, and aversions. The most obvious advantage we can take of another is by getting something away from him, and the method occurring readiest to make the sight of him entertaining is by doing him a displeasure: for it requires some acquaintance with the tastes, and character, and disposition, to know how we can oblige a man, or wherein we can have the benefit of his assistance or pleasures of his conversation; but one may take away or snatch up what lies between us, or do hurt to anybody one never saw before.

And having reason to expect the same first motions in others we have been conscious of in ourselves, it gives us an unfavourable opinion of new faces: besides, while it is uncertain whether they stand well or ill disposed towards us, prudence will direct to guard against the latter in the first place, and keep us upon our self-defence until we know something more particularly of them. Therefore children are shy and fearful among strangers, and the vulgar come among them with either a dread or a defiance, according as they think themselves stout enough to make their party good: nor do men wear off these sentiments until by converse in the world they learn to know dispositions by looks and appearances, and become well versed in the methods of civility proper for removing all suspicions of themselves, and ingratiating with whatever company they fall into. But so long as fears and jealousies subsist, it is natural to use the utmost efforts for driving off or disabling the causes of them: therefore I imagine that if two companies of savages, utterly unknown to each other, should happen to meet, they would fall a fighting: and we of the civilized countries have still so much of the savage left in us, that we fall a censuring, ridiculing, observing blemishes, and picking holes in characters, manners, and sentiments. Nor perhaps are there many, who if they examine themselves narrowly, might not find that they rarely come into company, unless of intimates, without a little spice of hostile disposition and a spirit of defiance, though their good sense and good breeding overpower and stifle it.

5. These observations upon the turns that human nature takes spontaneously were, I suppose, the inducements with Hobbes to lay down, that men were born enemies to one another, and that it was nothing but necessity and weakness which drove them into society to provide for their mutual defence: but it had become a philosopher to have gone to the bottom of things, and not charge upon nature what does not appear in us until some time after we come out of her hands. Whoever observes little children may perceive them wholly wrapped up within themselves, attentive only to present sensations of pleasure and pain; so they are born with neither friendship nor enmity, but have the seeds sown in them that will produce both: and if we must ascribe the plants to nature because she furnishes the soil and the seeds, we may with as much justice say they are born friends to the species, as enemies. For the pleasures they receive from anything naturally inclines them to affect the source from whence they flow, and the tendence of their parents or people about them, the entertainment found among their play-fellows, and habitude with the rest of the family, give them a concern for the persons: so that they will cry upon seeing mamma, or nurse, or brother, or sister, or John, or Molly in pain, without apprehension of any hurt to redound therefrom to themselves. On the other hand, as the active powers increase, and observation enlarges her field, they produce wantonness and greediness; which are mere selfish motions at first, but quickly beget suspicipion, strangeness, variance, and antipathy.

For Providence does not give us the motives of action immediately by the

hand of nature, but lays the springs of them, and places us in such situation as will call them severally forth to operate, so as to produce that series of events which was designed to pass among free agents: for the benefits and pleasures we daily receive from one another invite us to union and society, as our competitions and fears urge us to discord; which two powers, by their opposite action, counterbalance and give motion to each other: for being wisely mingled together in due proportion, they invigorate industry, whet contrivance, and furnish out all the business of the world. Their effects have been remarked in ancient times, for we find by Hesiod, that Eros and Eris, that is, Love and Strife, were holden to be the two antagonist powers which produced order out of Chaos: but their province was carried farther than we have had occasion to consider it, being extended to the natural as well as the moral world: for attraction and repulsion were supposed to be the same among matter, as union and discord among mankind.

But Eros and Eris, though heretofore esteemed first principles of motion, are not properties annexed by Omnipotence, but effects worked by the provisions of Wisdom. I have already shown them not innate in the human mind, but growing from the appetites excited by pleasure and pain: neither can they be inherent properties of matter, for nothing can act where it is not; therefore when bodies approach or recede from others at a distance, how small soever, they must be driven to or from each other by external impulse of something touching or striking upon them. So their action is the result of some other cause, of whose nature and manner of operation we know nothing, nor can scarce so much as conjecture; though we find it made to act in such admirable contrivance, as to produce all that variety of regular motions we call the courses of Nature.

Nevertheless, there is this difference between inanimate and perceptive Beings with respect to the final end to be worked out by the principles actuating them; that matter has no interest of its own, being incapable of receiving either good or evil, therefore whatever passes among it must be intended for the benefit of sentient creatures. But, were repulsion wholly to cease, attraction, being left without a competitor, must draw the whole material universe into one solid lump, which could excite no variety of perceptions in any Spirit: as on the other hand, were repulsion to reign alone, it must break the whole into single atoms, and keep them perpetually stationed at equal distances from each other, where they could exhibit as little variety as in their former state: in either case there would be a general quiescence, a dreary uniformity, with no succession of ideas, nor materials for science and intelligence to work upon. Therefore we may presume that Eros and Eris will for ever have a joint sway over the material world throughout every part of it, and their forces be so wisely adjusted together, as to produce all the assortments, separations, and motions, necessary for the uses of spiritual substance.

But with respect to the latter, which has an interest in what passes among it, and is capable of good and evil, the case is widely different: for Eris generates hurt and mischief, so that were it to prevail alone in the world, there would be nothing but havoc, vexation, and misery. Whereas Eros begets harmony, increase of strength, mutual good offices, and happiness; and when vigorous, will prove a sufficient spur to industry without aid of its antagonist: we find by experience that, in proportion as we can improve the influence of this power, things go on with us more currently and smoothly our wants are better supplied, our accommodations better pro-

vided for, our pleasures multiplied, our troubles lessened, nor have we so much time hanging heavy upon our hands for want of employment. The blessed Spirits above, exalted to the perfection of their nature, live altogether under the influence of Eros, yet is their happiness complete and uninterrupted; nor have we reason to suppose their activity ever lying unemployed, either in giving testimony of gratitude to their Creator in carrying on his designs, or in works productive of benefit to their fellow-creatures.

Perhaps the troubles abounding among embodied Spirits, and the dreadful miseries among some of the inorganized, occasioned by the discordant power, may be a necessary spectacle, directing them what measures to pursue, by warning them what to avoid: for we cannot well account for the permission of evil in this world, and severity of punishment consequent upon it in the next, otherwise than by some signal benefit redounding therefrom to higher orders of being: but the spectacle alone suffices for them, nor have they occasion for any mixture of the malignant principle among themselves. But among mankind, as human nature at present stands circumstanced, the joint action of both powers is requisite: not that the benignant principle might not answer all our purposes completely, had we enough of it in our breasts to overcome that averseness to labour, and indulgence of appetite, which are perpetual clogs upon our activity; and strength of mind enough to take effectual warning from mischiefs at a distance, without their immediately touching ourselves. But we being not so happily constituted, Eris is permitted to hold sway among us, to supply our deficiency in the other principle whereto it was intended to conduct us: for the smart of its evil effects rouses us up to a little consideration, and dear-bought experience gradually increases our value for that better influence whereby we might avoid them.

Thus Eros and Eris must perpetually work upon matter as joint operators to produce all those modifications and changes of form which constitute the health and beautify the face of Nature: but among spiritual substances the former is the sole end had in view, and the latter only as a means employed to lead thereto, through the stages of imperfection. For God has thought proper not to put mankind at once in possession of that harmony whereto they were created, but draws them into it insensibly by the workings of a contrary principle: and with a little careful observation upon the course of affairs upon earth, we may discern many of the steps by which discord helps us forward in our approaches towards union.

7. The continual supply of necessaries and conveniences from parents, the engagement and solace they find in the care of their children, and pleasures mutually received among play-fellows, first cement us together, raise us a little out of ourselves, and begin a family attachment: and though greediness and wantonness sometimes a little disturb the union, yet the visible expedience of preserving it unbroken keeps them within bounds. But with respect to persons between whom such union has not been cemented, there is no apparent expedience to lay a restraint upon those turbulent humours: so they are left to take their full scope, from whence injury, abuse, and continual suspicion must ensue. And this fear of strangers protects and increases the attachment to intimates, for a man never enjoys his friends so heartily as after having been teazed and terrified among persons he distastes, nor ever is so fond of home as when apprehensive of danger abroad; nor perhaps could we keep our boys from continually running away, if they might expect the same kindness and tender usage everywhere as they meet

with from our hands. Thus to take a metaphor from matter, the repellant quality of external bodies holds their internal parts together in a stronger cohesion.

But single families cannot furnish all the accommodations convenient for them within themselves, nor find that variety of amusements the human mind requires, to prevent satiety from creeping upon it; they must soon perceive that one can supply what another wants, and one has hit upon methods of entertainment which are new and unthought of by the other: alliances, commerce, and mutual intercourse give them a liking to one another, and join them into cities or districts; which become larger families wherein each individual has some concern for the rest, because contributing to his uses or pleasures; and the bands of union are extended to a wider compass. Yet rapaciousness and wantonness still continuing parts of the human character, the inhabitants of one district or city will be apt to invade the properties of another, who will naturally exert themselves and set their wits to work to contrive methods of defence, or of retaliation upon the invaders: but finding themselves too weak to effect a perfect security, both against open violence and secret fraud, or being tired of perpetual squabbles with their neighbours, they will try to strike up an agreement with them, or to associate themselves with some other cities, which together may form a nation of sufficient extent and power to repel invaders, and preserve domestic quiet.

Thus perhaps it may be true that men were first driven into large communities by fear and self-defence, because in a state of nature they might not be sensible of any other benefits redounding from them: but having once tasted the sweets of society, they would not want other motives to hold them in it. For I may venture an appeal to the most selfish person among us, having any sober consideration of his own good, whether if he could be fully secured against all foreign invasions or domestic robberies, thefts, and injuries, he would yet be content to have a general anarchy prevail in the land, and would not regret the want of those markets, public buildings, posts, highways, and encouragements of arts, sciences, and manufactures, which are the effects of a national polity.

Nor is it any more than a perhaps that nations were actually first formed solely by fear: they may have been families, descendants of one ancestor, grown by numerous increase into a people, or colonies transplanted from thence into an uninhabited country; and this opinion is countenanced by ancient history. Or if any of them were made up of persons no ways related by nature, there were other means of collecting them together besides the dread of danger: for we may gather from the fables of Orpheus and Amphion drawing stones, and tigers and bears after them by the sweetness of their music, that it was not by terrors they drove the wild men dispersed about the forests and mountains into society, but lured them by the prospect of advantages and pleasures greater than they had experienced in their savage state.

Nevertheless, if fear and necessary self-defence had a share in the origin of states, this will only confirm what I have advanced before concerning the method taken by Providence in using the mischiefs of discord to bring men acquainted with the benefits of concord, and make their mutual attachment among one another more general. For whatever inducement first gathered them into nations, when once associated therein they have a national interest, and some degree of regard for all their fellow-members: they take part in every national prosperity, stand up for the honour of the nation,

and are ready to think a compatriot braver, stouter, more accomplished and more deserving than any foreigner. How confident is our mob that one Englishman can beat two Frenchmen! How proud the French populace of living under an absolute monarch, who has their all at his disposal! and pity the poor unhappy Englishman for having a property of his own which the King cannot take away.

8. But the whole leaven of wantonness and greediness, too deeply worked into human nature ever to be totally discharged again, spreads itself into families, cities, nations, or whatever other combinations men can be thrown into, and gains a new form in large communities which it could not assume before, turning into lust of fame and power. Hence proceed wars, encroachments, inroads, plunderings, conquest, and tyranny: yet these evils were not utterly unproductive of their salutary fruits, conquest having often ended in uniting several nations under one empire. The four great monarchies, though not universal as they were called, overspread a considerable part of the habitable earth: they must have produced great oppression, distress, and confusion at first, till in a little time things fell into a settled course, and the inhabitants lived more quietly and happily than they had done in their former condition. For the conquerors and conquered incorporated by degrees into one people, having a communion of interests and continual intercourse among them: whereby the bands of union, the sinews of commerce, and links of society, were stretched farther than they had ever been before. And even while wars and national animosities subsist, they tend to cement the union of individuals with the community; therefore it is a common artifice of policy to give ill impressions of a foreign nation, to make the subjects join more heartily against a detested enemy.

At the beginning of the last war, the French charged us with robberies and piracies for making reprisals upon their ships: and we in return branded them with dissimulation, treachery, and total disregard of the most solemn treaties, so that French faith became the same among us as Punic faith had been among the Romans. While the war lasted, we all loved our king and one another prodigiously, but scarce were preliminaries signed before we fell a squabbling among ourselves, for we are such boys that we must be doing mischief rather than nothing: if we cannot find employment in business, we must make it by wantonness; which takes delight to encourage revilings, calumnies, scandalous insinuations, and sometimes even indecencies against Majesty itself, all for want of better employment; and prompts to conclude our entertainments with drinking healths not so much in honour to the toast as in vexation to one another: nor do I doubt but that if a fair computation could be made, it would appear there has been more money thrown away within these few years upon ingenious Billingsgate in prose and verse, fit only to nourish the irritating humours, than has been laid out upon books of religion, morality, or science, which might mend the heart or improve the understanding. But we may presume all these evils operate to some good, though what good, it might be difficult for mortal man to guess: perhaps we should all doze in indolence; or be eaten up with the spleen in this humid climate, if we had not something to keep our bile in motion.

Nevertheless, it must be owned upon the whole, that those two qualities whereto I have ascribed the rise of the discordant passions, have been productive of signal advantages to mankind: for manufactures and commerce have been better improved, more arts invented, more accomplishments attained, more public works, as well military as civil, achieved, more regu-

larity, decency, and civility produced, by the impuse of covetousness or lust of fame, and that under-twig of it, vanity, than could be expected from what feeble sentiment of prudence and public spirit we possess. Even war, robbery, and wantonness have given occasion to many inventions and exercises of industry that would have been needless without them: the danger of encroachments among neighbouring states keeps them attentive to preserve the balance of power, thereby creating a common interest, and introducing an alliance and harmony between nations that might otherwise have remained for ever strangers; and the mutual jealousies of parties awaken the vigilance of the people, and render abuses of power less practicable. Thus the wisdom of Providence has mingled all varieties, both of the harmonizing and jarring passions, adjusted to one another in such admirable proportion as to form together a salutary composition, by which mankind has been gradually raised from their original ignorance and wildness to the degree of knowledge, discretion, mutual concern, and communion of interests, we see them arrived at in this present age.

9. Yet this wonderful complication of counteracting springs could not render the harmony complete among spiritual substances without the knowledge of God: for it is the origin from one common Father, the presidency of one Governor, that unites the whole Universe into one empire, and constitutes us citizens of the World; and that knowledge has proceeded slowly through many stages of error and imperfection. For God has been pleased to draw mankind in the approach towards him by steps that seemed to carry them directly from him, and lead them into just ideas of his Attributes through notions the most opposite to his character. A cordial hope and unreserved trust are the proper bands uniting the creature to the Creator; but these bands cannot well be twisted up of fear; yet it is said, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom, necessary to introduce that very Charity which when perfect will cast it utterly away; and the fear of hobgoblins has sometimes proved the secret avenue conducting into the fear of the Lord. For this first loosened the attachment to objects of sense, and put the savage upon efforts of reflection concerning the things unseen: which efforts, though faint and fruitless, and perhaps hurtful in themselves, yet opened the passage and cleared the way into the fields of reason and contemplation.

It seems reasonable to imagine, that persons who had gotten an awe over others, would endeavour to preserve the influence of that awe when their backs were turned, and for that purpose might notch a stick into something that could be fancied a human face, setting it up in a corner with pretence that it would inform them of whatever should be done contrary to their orders in their absence. Such stratagems as these require no great invention, our nurses, the silliest set of people among us, can hit upon the like: for they tell their children of an old man in the cupboard that will take them away when they are naughty; and if they play unlucky tricks slily, the little bird that peeps in at the window will tell of it.

Then if some person who had been greatly reverenced among them happened to die, the thought and the want of him would remain strong for a while upon the minds of those left behind: they would frequently dream of him, and those dreams, among a gross and simple people, would sometimes be taken for real conversations. This would give an easy handle to such as were more cunning than the rest, to pretend an intercourse with the departed, and by means of orders or advices feigned to have been received from them, to work their ends upon the others. In a little time they might

improve upon their first inventions, and find an account in enlarging the powers of the deceased, ascribing to them the management of rains, and winds, and weather, of increase and sterility in cattle, the fruits of the earth, and herbs of the field; giving them an influence upon the courses of fortune, the turn of events, and success of transactions among the living. And as some of these venerated names would be handed down to succeeding generations, among whom everything relating to the persons had been forgotten, this would naturally give a rise to a distinction between the immortal gods, of whose origin nobody could give an account, and heroes or demi-gods who had been remembered conversant upon earth: for the Theogony of Hesiod and other genealogies seem to have been additions of the poets and naturalists endeavouring to embellish or allegorize the popular opinions, as appears probable from the great variety of lineages deduced among them.

By these means the belief of beings in the air having an influence upon the courses of things below, might be established among an ignorant people, which, though extremely gross and imperfect, were some benefit to them: for as it is better the child should stand in awe of the old man in the cupboard, or the little bird at the window, than be under no check at all, so it is better men should think Apollo or Pallas, a stick or a statue, observes whether they do right or wrong, than have no restraint upon their actions whatever. Besides, the benefit this notion was of to mankind in general is more to be considered than that it might do to the persons entertaining it, and it was one step, though a very small one, in the progress of true religion in the world. For the persuasion of an invisible Power, observant of what passes among us, and having an influence upon the affairs of men, is the first article of a sound and saving faith; and how much soever the notions of such power were confused, inconsistent, and absurd, still the general opinion of its existence was a point gained, which would make another step in useful knowledge more easy to be taken: for an instructor will have less to do with one who already admits a superior Being, of whatever kind or quality, than with one who is so totally immersed in objects of sense as to have no conception of anything he does not see, or hear, or handle; because in the latter he must inculcate the reality of such Being before he can proceed to show what it is; whereas he may lead the other by pointing out his inconsistencies into something of a more regular and uniform system.

10. At first we may presume that men would have no farther concern, than for the preservation, the accommodations, and pleasures of life; but as they advanced in society, and fell into a more settled way of living, they would extend their thoughts beyond their own immediate wants, and begin to take an interest in the welfare of their children and descendants, after themselves should be no more. Their veneration likewise, and the honour they saw paid to the memory of such as had been eminent among them, would excite a wish to obtain the like for their own names: this must extend their concern beyond the present life, and make them desirous of gaining an immortality by living for ever in the remembrance of those who should come after them. Add further that the workings of their own imagination or confident assertions of some who had an end to serve thereby, might persuade them that some part of their own persons would survive after death, remaining capable of wants and gratifications, of enjoyment and suffering; and they might soon conclude that the prosperity of their children, the continuance of their names, and good or evil fortune of their surviving part, would depend upon their present conduct, and the favour of the immortal gods or heroes.

Here is now a second step gained in the progress towards true religion: for besides the belief of a superintending Power, presiding over the affairs of men, here is a concern for futurity, and a persuasion that our interest therein will stand affected by our management upon earth, and by our cares to engage the protection and escape the displeasure of Heaven; and thus we see how Providence may employ the mingled operations of fear, credulity, artifice, and vanity, to work a general reception of two fundamental articles. Nevertheless, it may be expected that those articles in their infancy must lie overwhelmed among a multitude of gross errors and absurdities: for the passions of men, the examples of vice, folly, and contention among the most admired, the interest of states, the craft of private persons, accidental impressions of fear, and fantastic rovings of imagination, each adding something of its own, must together make a motley mixture.

And accordingly we find in all ancient history what a multitude of incoherences and absurdities abounded in the first received creeds, concerning the immortal Gods and Demi-gods, the wars, rebellions, quarrels, thefts, over-reachings, amours, infidelities, and partialities among them, their inhabitancy in statues made by men, their declarations by oracles, omens, and prodigies; concerning the apparitions of shades and spectres, the enjoyments of Elysium and punishments of Tartarus. Yet it being obvious that no community could subsist upon earth without something of order and government, there was the like notion of a subordination and assignment of particular provinces among the Gods. Jove ruled the heavens, Neptune over the sea, Pluto in the infernal regions; Minerva had the patronage of wisdom; Apollo of wit; Mercury of cunning; Ceres presided over eatables, and Bacchus over drinkables: but that they might not encroach upon one another's provinces, as such Gods subject to the worst of human passions might be apt to do, Jove had a supreme authority over all.

Which last notion opened a narrow passage towards the unity of the Godhead, yet was even this little avenue choked up with doubts and confusion; for the Parcæ were holden sometimes to control the Will of Jove, sometimes only to enforce his decrees by their spinning, and if he had once bound himself by Styx, he durst not recede though he should afterwards change his mind: so one cannot well tell whether Jove, though supreme over the Gods, had not another supreme power over him.

Such fluctuations and incoherences in the popular doctrines set reflection at work, and gave birth to philosophy: for reason must have materials furnished it from elsewhere to begin upon, and philosophers, as well as other men once were children, susceptible of impressions stamped upon them by their teachers or worked into them by their companions; nor could their sagacity, when mature enough to act for itself, do any more than examine the opinions they had imbibed, endeavouring to separate the solid from the empty, and pursue such further lights as could be stricken out from what had stood the test. But the reason of one man can run very little lengths, for his life will be almost spent in getting rid of erroneous prejudices before he can begin to make an advance towards truth; and his discovery will require time to settle into something of a current opinion, before it can serve as a foundation for another to proceed upon.

11. The earliest persons of thought and careful reflection, such I mean as were not actuated by ambition or avarice, seem to have been legislators and founders of states; and the immortality they had in view, to have been that

of perpetuating their names among posterity with love and honour for the services they had done. For having found beneficence, even to succeeding generations, had in general esteem, and striking to their moral sense, they supposed it innate, the perfection of human nature, and noblest sentiment upon which a reasonable creature could act: and indeed they were right, though without knowing why, Providence thus leading them by the general estimation into the most extensive Charity their situation was capable of, and the prosecution of their own truest interests. It were mere guess-work to say what was their belief of the Gods and a future state, for being perfectly satisfied with the principle whereon they proceeded, they might be too much taken up with that to think closely of anything else, and studied only how to turn popular opinions to the best advantage of the communities under their care.

Next arose persons who were desirous of going to the bottom of things, and investigating the causes of all the phenomena observable around: these were the philosophers who, finding the Gods esteemed the Governors only, not makers of the World, interfering now and then occasionally to set things right when running amiss, and controlled in their measures by dread of Styx and distaffs of the Parcæ, concluded there were some general laws of nature governing both Gods and men; so set themselves to study the primary properties and elementary principles of bodies, in order to frame hypotheses of the manner wherein all visible productions might be formed from thence. Thus the first philosophers seem to have been merely naturalists, employing only the names of the Gods to allegorize the Powers of Nature: for with them Jove was the ether, Juno the air, Neptune water, Vulcan fire, Cybele the earth, Pluto subterraneous vapours and minerals, Minerva understanding, Apollo genius, Mercury craft, and so on. Or if they had anything of the Theologian, and held the existence of intelligent beings superior to man, they supposed them productions of the finer elements, as they did the first men of the grosser: for they made Jove, the Father of the Gods, the Son of Chronos, or Time and Rhea, or the Flood, that is, produced by the workings of mechanical causes in the efflux of rolling years.

But the study of nature, carefully and honestly pursued, will at last conduct to its Author, but by gentle steps and in length of time: so that if we transfer our expression from the essence of God to the knowledge of him, we may truly say, this was the offspring of Chronos. For when some close-thinking man had discovered a cause of the visible phenomena, he had done, leaving to his successor to find out the cause of that cause, which perhaps he might find among the operations of matter: a third would push on his inquiries a little farther, till speculation having run the utmost length of its line, and still finding matter incapable of furnishing a cause which was not the effect of some prior agency, recourse must be had at last to an immaterial Being.

12. It is not easy to ascertain the time when Philosophy first rose out of political science and corporeal objects: we have heard great things of Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, and other sages of earliest antiquity, but the accounts of them are much too imperfect and uncertain to be depended upon. Cudworth will have it probable that Orpheus taught the doctrine of the Trinity, or three co-eternal Hypostases in one Substance; but if we may take Cicero's word, Thales was the first who discovered an intelligent principle operating in the birth of Nature; for he held that all things were formed out of water, but that Mind or Intelligence was what threw the water into those various cohesions, forms, and motions, which we call the

productions of Nature. One cannot certainly tell whether he made his mind a distinct substance from the water, or only a quality residing, not in the single drops, but in the whole mass: for the ancients, as I have already taken notice in Chapter XIII. entertained a notion, that quality had an existence of its own distinct from that of the subject whereto it belonged, and inexisting in it; which inexistence was in the compounds, not in the several component parts, for there is no beauty in the single bricks, the mortar, the wood work, the glass panes of a house; the beauty resides in the whole composition aptly put together.

It seems most likely he had this latter idea, and so was not a complete Theist; because we find the introduction of Theism, that is, the doctrine of an intelligent Agent, the Author of Nature, and substantially distinct from the materials whereon he worked, claimed for Pythagoras in those called the golden verses: where he is alluded to as the person who first opened to Psyche, or the Spirit imprisoned in human body, a knowledge of the unfathomable Tetrachtys, the fountain of ever-flowing nature, that is the sacred name of four letters; by which Dacier says he meant Jehovah, which it seems in Hebrew contains only four letters, but it might as well have been ΖΕΥΣ or ΘΕΟΣ. It is pity Pythagoras did not talk English, for the name God having no more than three letters, he would then have preached up the worship of the sacred Triad, and Dacier might have been positive he had believed in the Trinity.

The epithet Ever-flowing, applied to Nature, is expounded by his commentators to signify only, that it shall last for ever, not that it has already had course from all eternity: yet I must beg leave to be excused from placing any more implicit faith in the commentators upon the golden verses, than in those upon the Bible. For when we recollect the received tenet among Philosophers, that whatever was generated in time must be corrupted in time, the future perpetuity of Nature will infer its prior eternity: nor is this inconsistent with its springing from a fountain, for where the fountain is eternal, the stream may well have run for ever. Against their exposition of the Oath we are exhorted to reverence: I have no objection; for this seems a proper term to express the perfect freedom of the divine agency, because nothing could compel or induce him to swear besides his own voluntary choice; and immutability of the divine purpose, which for ever has and will preserve the courses of Nature, and the same order of succession in her changes; so that the several parts may take new forms in continual rotation, but the Universe remains always the same.

Hierocles explains the three first lines as describing three distinct orders of being essentially and perpetually different, their conditions not interchangeable with those of each other; which are the immortal Gods, the Heroes full of light, and the subterraneous Intelligences. Now, though instead of subterraneous he has used the epithet terrestrial, a translation which the learned Dacier tells us the Greek word can never bear, it is agreed on all hands that by those Intelligencies are to be understood the souls of good men departed, which the same Dacier assures us were holden by the Pythagoreans to mount up into Ether, and not to sink under ground.

But it is the surest way to expound the text by the text; and if we turn to the end of the poem, we shall find it conclude with an exhortation to follow the precepts therein contained, because whoever does so, will, upon getting rid of body, go into the pure Ether, and become an immortal God, incorruptible, no longer subject to death. Besides, we learn from Virgil,

who has never been charged with misrepresenting the Pythagorean doctrines, that there is an activity and celestial origin belonging to those seeds from whence grew the race of men, the cattle, all species of wild beasts, and fish of the sea: and in another passage, that the bees too possess a part of the divine mind, and have imbibed the ethereal draughts, from whence men and animals drew their birth, and whereinto all shall be returned and resolved again; so that there is no such thing as death, but the living principles fly off into the upper heavens, and mingle among the stars.

All these things considered, one cannot imagine Pythagoras so inconsistent with himself as to hold three distinct, unchangeable natures in the regions unseen: we must suppose him recommending a veneration for them only, in compliance with the received opinions, to which all philosophers, except our modern minute ones, have ever shown a decent respect: but teaching among his adepts, that all created spirit was homogeneous, eternal, but produced by the divine will an eternity ago, and passing through various stages or forms of being in rotation; so that from an immortal God it might become a bee, a dolphin, a sheep, a lion, a man, or a hero full of light, according to the material organizations wherein it lay enveloped, and when dissolved from all vital union with matter whatever, would return to pure ether, and be an immortal God again.

Therefore, if I might offer my sense of the three first verses, I should construe or paraphrase them as follows. In the first place, worship the immortal Gods conformably to the ritual established in your country, and at the same respect the immutable nature of things, receiving their stability from the eternal purpose of the Almighty, sacred and inviolable as an Oath; in the next place, pay due honours to the Heroes full of light: nor omit to celebrate the memory of illustrious persons that have been laid under ground, by such festivals and commemorations as are customary. The meaning of these precepts I take to be, that we should use our reason, drawn from the contemplation of Nature, jointly with popular Religion, correcting the errors of the one by the other, employing either where most proper to bring those we have to deal with a step nearer towards the knowledge of their Maker, and universal Charity to their fellow-creatures, in such way as they can follow, and thereby steering clear between the bigot and the free-thinker.

13. However this be, and whether Pythagoras were the discoverer, it can scarcely be denied, that in his time there was the belief of a God in the proper sense of the word as we now use it, an omnipotent, intelligent, unproduced Being, Author of Nature and all her works: for the gods we have spoken of before were nothing more than huge flying men, of enormous strength, and bodies so finely contexted as to render them invisible, unless when they had a mind to show themselves by assuming a covering from the grosser elements. There was likewise the opinion of a future state of bliss and immortality, equal, or I may say preferable, to that of the Gods vulgarly worshipped, whereto men might rise by a steady rectitude of sentiment and conduct, that is, by Faith and good Works.

Here were great and important advances maintained ever after in the true Church of Philosophy, if I may so call it, for there have been grievous schisms and heresies there as well as in Religion; and the latter Academics were errant free-thinkers, never having any opinion of their own, but combatting everybody's else: if you said snow was white they would prove you mistaken, if you said it was black they would do as before: if you asked

them what they thought themselves, they would answer they could not tell, for it might be either. But I am scarce entitled to call it a Church, as consisting of Clergy alone without a congregation; for there never yet was people of Philosophers, nor ever could be, their Credenda being too refined and speculative for vulgar comprehension: neither had they authority enough to introduce a form of words serviceable for general use, which each person might understand in a grosser, or more refined sense, according to his respective capacity, yet conveying as complete a system as his understanding can contain.

Nor yet were their tenets either complete or fully established even in the closets of the studious: for Tully, in his Tusculan, disputation upon death, argued in the disjunctive, either that death put an utter end to us, or was the passage into a more perfect state; urging that in the former case it is a perpetual quiet sleep, without uneasy dreams, and upon that score we have no reason to be afraid of it; which argument might have been spared if he had not thought the other branch of the disjunctive doubtful. And in other places where he exhorts to the performance of noble actions, he speaks as much of an immortality by an honourable remembrance among posterity, as by any other way.

They do not appear to have had any thought of Creation, but believed God the Maker, not the First Cause or Creator of all things: Thales assigned him water to make a world with, Anaximenes fire; Anaxagoras a multitude of diversely shaped corpuscles, similar to the visible bodies composed of them; Plato seems to have had a notion of Substance in the abstract, which he calls Hyle, devoid of all form or quality whatever, until God was pleased to impress them upon it from archetypes in his own mind, and then it became a variety of bodies having specific differences, but was naked Substance before ever he took it in hand. To go as low as Seneca, who was perhaps the best Philosopher of his time, we find him starting a doubt whether God made his own materials, or only worked up such as he found already in being; by which question may be meant no more than whether the elements had an inherent specific difference of their own, or were all compounded of the same Materia Prima variously put together, and so it does not touch the point of creation at all. However, Seneca himself declares positively for the pre-existence of the materials, reserving the workmanship alone for the Province of Omnipotence, and pretends to account for the existence of moral evil this way: for, says he, God is good, willing to have made good men of us all, and has worked up the finest of his materials into such as far as they would go, but the rest of the elements were so untoward and cross-grained that it was impossible to make better creatures of them than has been done.

They had not, or at least did not take care to inculcate a sufficiently large idea of Providence comprehending the turns of events, respecting single persons as well as the great and general laws of Nature: for we find in Tulley's Nature of the Gods, that the Stoics, the most orthodox philosophers of those days, and strenuous asserters of Providence, held that God takes care of great things, but overlooks the small; and though they descended to the veriest trifles in matters of dreams, omens, prodigies, and phrenetic predictions, they ascribed those to an unaccountable sympathy in nature between certain things, not to declarations of the divine Will.

The dependence of free agency upon prior causes, and the foundations of Justice, were not clearly understood, nor could they comprehend how God might give us both to will and to do, without destroying the expecta-

tion of reward for well doing: so they supposed virtue an original acquisition of the mind, by self-exerted efforts, without anything exterior prompting or directing her thereto. Agreeably to which notion we see Horace praying, Give me competence of fortune, give me talents; as for perseverance in the right use of them, I will procure that for myself: thus dedying God more than half his glory, and the acknowledgment due for the best of his gifts. In consequence of this opinion they conceived an intrinsic self-worked difference in men, which made them too regardless or too despairing of the generality, calculating their systems for a few contemplative, rightly-disposed persons, not endeavouring to draw out from thence a form of doctrine that might be commonly intelligible, and universally serviceable; nor acting in concert to recommend it, whereby they might have had more weight upon the vulgar.

They made no effectual advances towards propagating the doctrine of Equity and Equality, whereby God appears to be the common Father and equal Protector of all, neither arbitrary in his dealings nor partial in his favours, as a respecter of persons: that firmest basis of a general interest, strongest cement of mutual union, and clearest rational avenue to universal Charity.

Nor did they thoroughly enough consider the nature of man, treating their scholars as purely rational creatures, not sensitivo-rational; scarce reflecting, that the bulk of mankind have most of the sensitive, and all men a considerable part of it in their composition, and that the impulses of one faculty may be mistaken for judgments of the other: neither did they study the use of ceremonies, customs, and methods, whereby habit and imagination may be brought insensibly to assist in the services of reason.

Yet I would not by any means undervalue the sages of antiquity, nor lessen the veneration due to them for the benefits redounding to us from their labours, whereby they were aiding as instruments in the hand of Providence, towards nursing up human reason to the degree of vigour and soundness we find it now possess. Therefore their merit might be no ways inferior to the best among us, nor might our Divines and Philosophers, placed in their situation, have made a whit better advances: if we can now soar to greater heights, it is not owing to our greater strength of wing, but to the advantage afforded us of taking our rise from higher ground.

14. One cannot well determine how far Philosophy might have pushed on her course by repeated efforts in successive generations. Possibly one man's reason, still digesting and improving upon the discoveries of another, might at last have attained as much useful knowledge as the human understanding is capable of receiving; wherein would be contained a complete Theology, a clear discernment of the true links uniting the Whole in a general interest, and a practicable system of morality, accommodated to the several uses and capacities of all mankind; and means might have been found to render these things intelligible to every one so far as to answer all his occasions, so that a sound Faith, a well-grounded Hope, and an unreserved Charity might become general, which must have restored a golden age, a paradisaical state.

But God judged proper not to wait the slow advances of human speculation; he has been graciously pleased to hasten the progress by making provision of causes for several providential events. The art of printing has contributed greatly to the advancement of learning, but this was not the discovery of any philosopher: the world was long ago acquainted with the method of stamping inscriptions upon medals and seals, which one

would think might have put some curious person upon contriving to stamp the pages of a book; yet was this never thought of until the appointed time written in the book of Heaven.

Glass was the invention of some manufacturer having no more in view than the raising a fortune by his new manufacture: but from hence we are supplied with microscopes, telescopes, and prisms, which let us into secrets of Nature unsuspected before, open to us the immeasurable grandeur of the Universe, and bring us acquainted with animals to whom a spoonful of vinegar serves for a habitable world; thereby raising our idea of the Author of Nature by displaying the magnificence and the wonders of his works. From hence likewise have proceeded gradually a more exact knowledge of the laws of attraction, the velocity of light, the existence of ether, and extreme rarity of bodies. Thus the unlearned has been made to lend a helping hand to the contemplative in the prosecution of his science, and the man of this world instrumental in opening a larger field to our Theology.

The magnetic power of the loadstone was known two thousand years ago, but remained an object of idle curiosity for many ages, until not long since, the uses of the needle being hit upon, have opened a new world, given a readier access to remotest regions of the old, and tended to familiarize the several nations upon earth.

Gunpowder is said to have been the lucky discovery of a monk, trying experiments without expectation of any such result; but how much has this changed the polity of nations, and civilized the rugged manners of war! making it depend more upon science than personal courage or bodily strength, uniting the civil in one interest with the military, which must protect industry and commerce to draw supplies from thence for the expensive preparations necessary; and spares a conquered country, to have its assistance in transporting the unwieldy machines, and because more may be expected from contributions than from plunder.

We may term these inventions accidental, and so indeed they were with respect to us, for no man could have foreseen the day beforehand when they would happen; but accidents arise from certain causes lying in train to produce them when and in what manner they shall come to pass; and since those have had a great influence upon the affairs of men, they are worthy our referring to the Disposer of all events.

15. But the most evidently providential event, or rather train of events, and most quickening the progress of saving knowledge, was that of the Jewish dispensation. For accounts of this we must necessarily recur to the Old Testament, having nothing else that will carry us far enough back; for Homer, the oldest profane writer extant, is, I think, supposed cotemporary with Solomon, and the transactions he speaks of to have passed in the time of Jeptha: if there were other authors at hand, I should think it prudent to give them a due consideration, but since we have only Moses, we must be content with the materials he has furnished us. Nor must I upon this occasion regard him as an inspired writer, for it may be remembered the part I have taken upon me is that of a reconciler between contending parties, so I must proceed upon grounds that may be admitted on both sides: therefore I shall meddle with nothing supernatural, which might be objected against as incredible, but employ such parts only of his narration as might have been received upon the credit of Livy or any common historian. For the like reason I purpose to go no higher than Abraham, because it is the humour of some among us to regard all that has been recorded of the earlier and antediluvian times, as fabulous.

And I think it could not be doubted, had we no better authority than that of Livy for the fact, that there was such a person, eminent in his time, and the founder of a family, whom he bred up in the belief of one God, supreme Governor of heaven and earth, and arbiter of the affairs of men; and preserved them from the contagion of superstition and idolatry prevailing everywhere round about. I shall not pretend to decide what we are to think of the angels with whom he is said to have been conversant, but we may gather thus much from the mention made of them, that he held there were intelligent creatures superior to man, but subordinate to God, and never interfering in human affairs unless when commissioned thereto by special orders from above: this their very name implies, for Angel is the same as Messenger, which shows that they were known to men no otherwise than by the errands they were supposed to be sent upon by their Master.

I am not concerned with the reality of those Angels' appearance, let him only have dreamt of them, and taken his dreams for realities: how came it he did not dream they were independent powers, self-existent, or produced by some fatality or plastic energy of Nature, and God only an Olympian Jove having a little more strength and authority than his fellow Gods? Or how happened it that nobody in other countries should ever dream of one supreme Power, Governor and Maker of all other Beings, before the times of Pythagoras, or suppose Thales, who was but a little earlier, and both of them many centuries posterior to Abraham? for he was no Philosopher, he never pried into the secrets of nature, nor pursued the demonstrations of mathematics, nor studied the courses of the heavenly bodies, nor dived into the depths of metaphysics; but was a plain man, occupied in the management of his cattle, and providing accommodations for his household; and his Theology was such as was intelligible, not only to adepts, but to his servants, his shepherds, and all under his influence.

Whence got he then this purity of sentiment concerning the things unseen, unmingled with anything of the notched stick, the old man in the cupboard, or the quarrelling, intriguing, over-reaching immortal Gods, the deified Heroes, or subterrraneous Intelligencies? We dare not say he received it by tradition from Noah and Adam, nor by supernatural illumination: for fear of bringing a discredit upon our intellects, as being too weak to throw off the prejudices of the nurse and the school-master, which would never stand the test of all-deciding ridicule. What then shall we say? was it the remains of a rational system stricken out by some Philosophers who lived a thousand years before him, but whose works and even remembrance have been clean swept away by inundation of barbarous nations? or was it an accidental discovery springing originally from the notched stick by many gradations through the channels of fear, credulity, vanity, cunning, and policy among his predecessors?

We have not the least hint of any such primeval Sages or antepatriarchal Saracens, Goths, and Vandals, even in fabulous history: so their very existence is mere hypothesis, trumped up to serve a turn. But admitting the supposition, unsupported as it is by any shadow of evidence, how chanced it that those genuiue remains were preserved only in his family? Or if craft and credulity sufficed to bear such excellent fruits, why could they never produce the same in any other soil? If it were the growth of mere natural causes, yet Nature and all her movements, as well accidental as regular, were laid out at her birth in the plan of the Almighty: we must therefore acknowledge it a particular Providence, that in the formation of this sublunary system he prepared natural causes to produce the seeds from

whence in long process of time should spring a tree of sound knowledge over-spreading the earth. It seems probable and appears to have been fact, if we may take Moses's word, that the true God was known to Enoch, Melchisedeck, Noah, and others before Abraham, but they could not transmit it inviolate to their descendants: he first prevailed to make it the received doctrine among all his household, and entailed it as an unalienable estate upon his posterity; from whence he became entitled to be called the father of the faithful.

16. I shall not touch upon the blessing given to Isaac and Jacob, because this would be building upon controverted ground, but suppose it will be admitted that this family grew into a numerous nation, still possessed with the persuasion of one God omnipotent, Lord of heaven and earth, besides whom there was none other God; which persuasion was peculiar to themselves. For though most other nations had their patron God, upon whose protection they depended, yet they allowed their neighbours to have tutelary Deities too, contending often and struggling with their own: if they succeeded in an expedition, they extolled their own God as the mightiest, if beaten they would pass over to the victorious God as the more potent: or at other times endeavour to keep upon good terms with both by taking the neighbouring Deity into a share of their worship. This last notion crept in at frequent intervals among the Israelites, from the days of the golden calves down to the end of their monarchical government: nevertheless the worship of Jehovah still continued the national Religion, and though sometimes overwhelmed for a while, was never wholly stifled, but always revived again in full vigour.

At the captivity, when one might expect their distressed condition, by lessening the opinion of their protector, should have driven them into all the modes of their conquerors, as had happened to the ten tribes before them, on the contrary we find them rivetted more strongly in their primitive belief, so that idolatry and polytheism could never after find an entrance among them. It is not necessary for our present purpose that this should have been effected by a supernatural interposition; admit it were compassed by the craft and management of their principal men who used this cement to keep their people united together, as knowing that if they suffered them to mingle amongst others, they themselves must lose their influence and become persons of no consequence. But had not other enslaved nations, their principal men too, men of craft, and management, and ambition, as desirous of keeping a populace firmly attached to their interests? Yet which of them could ever bring a people, who had been perpetually wavering in the object of their worship at home, to become so unalterably fixed in the midst of strangers as never to admit a mixture of foreign worship again.

What if we should reject all the wonders of the Burning Bush, the Sun standing still, the exploits of Gideon and Sampson, making them interpolations of Ezra as artifices to strengthen the faith of his people: have not other writers elsewhere interpolated, invented, and forged? Yet could never establish a steady credit to pass down inviolate to succeeding generations. What then occasioned the difference? shall we say it was owing to chance or accidental circumstances in the character and condition of the populace? Be it so: still we know that chance and casualty of circumstance, the machinations and successes of craft and policy, must proceed from their adequate causes, deriving in an unbroken chain from the springs first set at work by the Almighty in his formation of a world. Therefore when they concur to produce an event which will spread a beneficial influence upon all

mankind in after ages, it falls properly within our description of things signally providential.

17. Let us now proceed to another persuasion of this people, grafted upon that of their being the peculiar care of God; I mean their expectation of an extraordinary person to arise among them. They had before believed, that God had established the house of David for ever, and that he would preserve the throne in that family against all the power of neighbouring princes to overturn it: but this hope proving abortive, they were then persuaded there should arise one from his loins in due time who should restore the kingdom to Israel; and this opinion they built upon certain types and prophecies recorded in their ancient writings. I have nothing to do with the significancy of the types nor interpretation of the prophecies, the exact time when the sceptre may be truly said to have departed from Judah, nor propriety of understanding a promise made for the comfort of a besieged city, almost perishing with famine, to relate to a child who should be born of a virgin above five hundred years after. Let the application be as forced and fantastical as you please, still they had their effect upon the imaginations of the people: and this is enough for my purpose.

For unless you will say, that God was ignorant what effect they would produce, or to what uses the priests and rulers would turn them, it must be allowed that he permitted the causes with a view to their consequences: therefore may be said to have spoken by them to the Jewish nation, in like manner as he speaks to our reason by his works of nature. But when God speaks, he will do it in a language to be understood by those to whom it is addressed, and exciting the ideas proper for them to entertain: it is no matter whether we or others can rationally understand them in the same manner or no, we might as well cavil that the prophecies were delivered in Hebrew instead of English, which we should have understood better. Certain it is they did suffice to answer their purpose of keeping up an expectation among the Jews, who began to grow impatient, and did actually persuade themselves, either upon solid or fancied grounds, that the Sceptre was departed, and their Shiloh at hand, about the time when Jesus entered upon his ministry.

Which national opinion was a necessary preparative for the introduction of his Gospel, which was confined to the Jews during his life, and for some time after: for we may gather from the story of Cornelius the Centurion that it had not been preached to any Gentile before, and must presume that the Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, making the three thousand to whom Peter preached, were Jews settled in those countries. But the expectation of a Restorer would not suffice alone, for it seems there were several pretenders to the benefit of it: there wanted the designation of some particular person in whom that general expectance might centre, and this was effected by a comparison of the prophecies with events, and by signs and wonders believed to have been worked by Jesus, and those delegated under him. I shall as before forbear to examine the accomplishment of the prophecies, or evidence of the miracles: to enter upon these discussions would be carrying the shoe-maker beyond his last, therefore shall leave them to Divines, who are better prepared for the work by a kind of learning I have not had time to make a proficiency in; nor do I find a want of it upon the present occasion.

For I desire no more to be granted me than what will scarce be disputed, that multitudes were drawn into a belief of the prophecies being accomplished, and the miracles really performed. Now whether this belief was

worked by craft, prejudice, delusion, and enthusiasm, or by rational conviction upon a full, fair, and careful examination, all those springs of persuasion must be acknowledged to lie under the control of Providence: therefore the event produced by them having since extended so wide over the earth, must be regarded as one of the main engines employed in the administration of the moral world. By a great distance of time, and almost total difference in our forms of expression and methods of logic from those of the Jews, the evidences once fresh and glaring are become obscured, so that it often requires a fund of science to clear up a point which a common man in the Apostolic days might have satisfied himself of by a little inquiry among his neighbours.

But for the generality there are the sacred records received upon the authority of the Church: for the plain man justly concludes that a number of persons, whom he knows to be men of learning and good manners, would not combine to persuade him into a veneration for what they had no good grounds to believe themselves, therefore relies upon their judgment in a matter he stands in no situation to judge of himself. And herein he acts as rationally as one who takes down the drugs prescribed by a physician of whom he has a good opinion, though he understands nothing of their efficacy, nor can be certain upon his own knowledge whether they may not be poisonous. And for such as have some capacity to judge for themselves, but thinking themselves called to other exercises of their industry, are no more at leisure than I to rummage over all the wilds of controversy, there is the internal evidence drawn from experience, and their own observation of the benefits accruing to mankind from the promulgation of the Gospel. Nor can I help repeating what I have once declared before, that to me the external evidence seems to be in reality the deciding weight with most men: for in the few controversial writings I haye dipped into, I can perceive as much zeal and prejudice to the full in the free-thinker as in the orthodox; both appear sometimes to think too well or too ill of the external evidences, according to their preconceived opinion of the cause.

18. Perhaps I shall be stopped short here with a round assertion that the influence has neither been so salutary nor so extensive as I seem to insinuate; for that Christians are not so good men as the Turks, the Chinese, the Tartars, or the Iroquois, nor are they more than an inconsiderable number in comparison with those we term infidels; Gordon, in his Geography, computes more than half the countries upon earth to be Mahometan, and of the remainder the greater part are Heathen, and the lesser Christian. But we may claim Mahometism as a botchy excrescence or spurious offspring of the Gospel: the professors of it preserve a great veneration for Isa or Jesus, look upon him much in the same light as we do Elias, and pretend that their prophet was the Comforter of whom we have promise in the Gospel; their Koran inculcates some of the most important truths contained therein, as I shall remark particularly by-and-by, and what there is good in it was borrowed from thence.

But I am under no necessity of settling the exact extent of the Gospel influence, nor effect it has had upon the lives of those who embrace it: let Christendom be so small a part of the globe as Gordon has made it, and the Turks, the Chinese, the Tartars, the Iroquois, men of purer innocence and stricter probity than Christians. Those who think so are welcome to go live among them, provided they do not desire me to go with them; yet I never heard of anybody doing so merely for the sake of better company, nor unless in some such hopes as that of getting a Jaghire, which when obtained

they bring home to spend among wicked Christians. The discussion of those points is needless to my present purpose, for I am not examining the sources of temporal happiness and convenience in the several countries upon earth, but observing the divine economy with respect to the race of men in general, and by what gradations the tree of sound knowledge has been nourished up towards maturity.

It seems a thing probable in itself, though we gave no heed to Moses, that others before Abraham had believed the Unity, and absolute Government of God, that he dealt with men according to their behaviour, and was good to all without exception who trusted in him: so here were the seeds of Faith, and Hope, and Charity, sown some how or other in single persons, or perhaps among a few intimates of similar sentiments and characters. But Abraham first made those the tenets of a family, embraced by all the members of his numerous household indifferently, the servants as well as the master and children, the gross as well as the more discerning: so here was the beginning of a community united together in a general interest by the proper cement, a dependence upon one protector who had all things under command. In the infant simplicity of mankind it was necessary to keep this family as much as possible separate from all others, that the cohesion of its parts might not be weakened by external attraction: from hence proceeded the great care taken to provide Isaac and Jacob with orthodox wives, the expedience of which caution appears by the examples of Ishmael and Esau, who intermarrying among the Canaanites, became dismembered from their parent plant, and engrafted upon Idolatry.

When a family grew into a nation, the general interest was extended to larger numbers, the heart of individuals opened wider, and their charity diffused to all who were descendants from the same stock, subjects of the same law, and partakers in the same form of worship. Yet the grossness of early times being not worn off, it was still necessary to employ repulsion in the assistance of cohesion, and they were taught to exercise severities upon their neighbours, to entertain an utter aversion and contempt of all other nations, as a means of uniting them more heartily with one another: for we have observed in a former part of this chapter, there is nothing cements vulgar minds so strongly as animosity against a common enemy. By this aversion and contempt, together with the ceremonies instituted for keeping them in a compact body, they were preserved in the belief of one God, incorporeal, supreme over all, and the idea of a general interest among the brethren, consequent upon the former, and were the only people in whom the like belief prevailed: for how largely soever we may attribute to Philosophy, with respect to the completeness of its doctrines, there never yet was a people of Philosophers, nor ever will be, unless it can be compassed by means of the dispensation we are now speaking of.

Whether they believed a future state has been doubted; it is plain this was no part of their public creed, nor was any other immortality propounded to them than that of the prosperity and endurance of their nation; as they were a gross and heavy-minded people, little apt to make advances beyond what was expressly taught them, it seems most probable the generality never thought so far as of another world, therefore could neither be said to embrace or reject it. But such among them as were men of reflection could not well miss of a conclusion so naturally following from the doctrine of one God, just and equitable, rewarder of every man according to his deeds, Lord of Hosts as well invisible as visible, Maker of heaven and

earth, who breathed into man the breath of life; compared with the great inequality of fortunes among persons of the same character here upon earth: and at last, after a long course of ages, the expectation of another life grew pretty current among them; for the Pharisees, who were more numerous than both the other sects, believed a resurrection.

By the coming of Jesus the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, the partition-wall broken down, a passage opened for the Gentiles to become the people of God, the ceremonial law abolished, righteousness preached to the poor, and the resurrection to eternal reward or punishment expressly taught as a popular doctrine. Therefore it may truly be said, that life and immortality were brought to light through the Gospel, notwithstanding they might be known to a few persons of thought and reflection for some ages before: for when a man has written a book, and communicated it to two or three of his friends, we do not say it has seen the light, we never use that expression until he has published it to the world; in like manner, the perpetuity of the Soul, together with personal reward and punishment after death, may be said to have been first brought to light by that which drew it from the closets of the studious, and procured it to be received as an undoubted truth by the public.

And as the knowledge of God among the vulgar, so the bounds of charity were likewise enlarged: for all of every nation who would, were admitted within the pale of salvation, which united them all in one general interest, and the communion of saints was made an article of faith: so that the whole society in heaven and earth became one entire body, actuated by the same spirit of concord under one Lord and one head. From the communion of interest naturally follows an equality of intrinsic value among the several members, so that he who brings a cobbler into the way of salvation, does as good a deed as if he could bring a man of rank, learning, and accomplishment: unless as the latter has more ability to do the same for others, and then the preference is due to him, not for his own sake, but for the sake of those whom he may advantage. It must be owned there are some harsh expressions against the Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, and such like, but these were given for the hardness of our hearts, that is, for persons in whom cohesion was still so weak as to need assistance from repulsion: but for such as have ears to hear, love to our neighbour is declared the second great commandment, and our neighbour explained to be any person, orthodox, heretic, or infidel, who stands in a situation to receive a kindness at our hands.

19. Thus we see by what careful nurture the tree of sound Theology has been raised among mankind; at first confined to narrow bounds, that it might strike strong root into the spot where it grew, and as it gathered strength to repel injuries from without, was made still to shoot out new branches, and extend the old ones over a wider compass of ground. And how the idea of a general interest was transferred from a few of similar temper to a whole family, from thence to a populous nation, to the professors of the same faith, to all mankind; and perhaps at length may spread to the universal host of perceptive beings: yet did this tree grow too fast for its strength, so that at the extremities it generated into a gross superstition, as bad as the idolatry it was intended to eradicate.

Then it was that God permitted Mahometism to grow from the corrupted roots, like a fungus from rotten wood, and give that excrescence a much larger course than ever the parent tree had reached to. Nor are we to think that he hereby undid his own work, but rather pruned it: for as we have re-

marked in the foregoing pages, that Heathenism makes one little advance in the progress towards true Religion, among those who were totally immersed in sensible objects, without suspicion of any superior power over them, so is Mahometism something of an advance to Heathens, and such Christians among whom their Religion had been so debased by mixtures of sorcery, conjuration, and the grossest image worship, as to bring it down to the level of paganism. For wherever the standard of Mahomet has prevailed, it has carried with it the belief of one God, incorporeal, invisible, supreme Governor of heaven and earth, not to be bribed with oblations and sacrifices, the sure protector and rewarder of such as serve him faithfully, the practice of many moral duties, the doctrine of future reward and punishment, and communion of interests among those who join in the right way of worship. These are important and fundamental articles, which perhaps could not have been otherwise established among ignorant or depraved people, incapable of receiving or retaining the doctrines of a better system. Even the Chinese, with all the boasted wisdom of their Literati, were never able to make them popular tenets without its assistance. So that the dispensation we have traced down from the Father of the Faithful, has already, either in its purity or its corruption, had an influence, according to Gordon's reckoning, over three-fourths of the globe.

You see how in tracing this clue I keep clear of all that wrangling and witticism wherewith the prophecies and miracles have been pelted by free-thinkers; for I may consent that the prophecies shall have been judiciously and honestly, or enthusiastically and craftily interpreted, the miracles genuine and real, or typical, allegorical, and counterfeit, as you please; still in either case the historical fact cannot be denied, that things have happened in the manner above related. But whatever has happened must have had certain adequate causes occasioning it to fall out in that manner, and whatever causes have operated, must have lain in a train derived originally from the action of the Almighty, the Disposer of all events, as well among the courses of Nature as the occurrences befalling mankind; but the event we have been speaking of is too important and beneficial for us to scruple assigning it to the particular designation of his Providence. For all things must necessarily flow from the First Cause by some channel or other, and if divines could show there were not natural causes in being sufficient to produce the effects taken notice of above, this would at once establish the credit of the supernatural.

20. But perhaps it will not be allowed, the Fungus can give nourishment to anybody, because it would be poisonous to us who have been used to purer diet. And indeed it must be owned the few salubrious juices it has imbibed from the parent root, have been vitiated by many heterogeneous mixtures; such as the duty of religious wars, the sensuality of future rewards, the allowableness of polygamy, concubinage, making mutes, castrations, and impurities I dare not defile my paper by naming: which though sometimes practised among Christians, were never yet esteemed a part of their Religion, nor countenanced thereby. Therefore, to be liberal in our argument, let us give up the benefits of Mahometism, and confine ourselves to the professors of Christianity, who though you reduce them to as narrow a compass as you can, will still be found more numerous than the Jews, and to have several additional branches in their tree of knowledge which had not sprouted forth among them.

For take the most illiterate person among us, and he will tell you there is one God, eternal, almighty, spiritual, holy, infinitely wise and good, Creator

as well as Maker and Governor of all things in heaven and earth; that tempests lay waste, earthquakes overturn, lightnings strike, diseases destroy, fires consume, accidents befall, where he commands, and forbear where he withholds; that his providence is ever wakeful, not only over nations and kingdoms, but over every particular person, so that no good or evil comes upon us without his knowledge and permission or appointment; that he continually observes our actions, remarks our words, and sees into our most secret thoughts; that what discretion and good dispositions we have, and vigour of mind to act according to them, were owing to him as well as our powers and our knowledge, for he giveth us both to will and to do; nevertheless, this does not destroy the justice of reward and punishment, wherefore it behoves us to be careful of our conduct, for that he will raise us up to immortality wherein our condition shall be affected by every deed, and word, and thought, passing with us upon earth; that there is a communion of Saints, and fellowship between them and the Angels; that the Church militant and triumphant together compose one body under one head, having a connection of interests throughout the whole, that advancing the glory of God by doing good to his universal Church or any member thereof, according to our powers and opportunities, is our first duty and foundation of all the rest; that whatever is done to the least among our brethren, be it no more than giving a cup of cold water, will not pass without its reward; that we owe a love to enemies and persecutors, to strangers, aliens, and infidels, and ought to abstain from all wanton cruelties and needless hurts, even to brutes and insects.

It will be asked, Do Christians regard all these things? I am afraid, but too little: yet are they parts of all their Creeds, for the meanest among them will acknowledge their truth whenever put in mind of it, though the words coming in at one ear commonly pass out again at the other the moment after their sound is over. Well, but do not the free-thinkers hold the same articles too? That I cannot tell: I have heard some of them stickle mainly for the absolute contingency of human action, the self-sufficiency of the will to do good or evil, the intrinsic personal difference between man and man, underived from any cause or antecedent provision of the Almighty, the limitations upon his power by the uncreated nature of things, his inability to make a bigot or a superstitious person happy. However, I hope they do hold most of the tenets before mentioned: but whence got they the knowledge of them? not from discoveries made by their own sagacity, I may venture to say: nor I believe from the remains of ancient philosophy, for some of them are not to be found there. They were once under the nurse and the school-master, who it is well known have been used to inculcate such things, to whom therefore it may be presumed the principles they retain of theirs were owing, notwithstanding they affect to hold them in such utter contempt.

21. Since then we see that God has been pleased, by an extraordinary series of events, continuing from the infancy of mankind, to nourish up a Religion whereby purer sentiments of himself and a more extensive charity are introduced among the vulgar, than has ever been done any other way, why should we scruple to avail ourselves of the benefits to be drawn therefrom, as well as anything we can gather from the contemplation of Nature? for both are his work, and both deserve our various attention upon that account. The course of affairs respecting the moral world proceeds, equally with the courses of nature, from the Will and eternal purpose, the Word or

Covenant of God, styled in Pythagorean language the Oath of Jove; therefore we do not reverence the Oath while we continue to treat either branch of it lightly: and experience of former times may convince us how expedient it is to employ both for supporting and strengthening one another.

Philosophy has never been able, notwithstanding many attempts by schools and lectures, by wise sayings, fables, and allegories, to spread her treasures among the multitude, nor gain authority enough to make her tenets received. Neither could she furnish her adepts with all the just sentiments of God and principles urging to extensive charity which are to be found in a common Christian, whose system contains sounder notions even of natural Religion, more profitable to the mind than they were acquainted with; as may appear on comparing of § 13, with the last section. Neither could she prevent them, longer than from Pythagoras to the immediate scholars of Socrates, from debasing her sublimest ideas by intermixtures of many idle questions, concerning the existence of species, forms, and qualities, distinct from the subjects possessing them, the evidence of the senses, the evil of pain, the summum bonum, the mystic powers of certain numbers, divination, prodigies, auguries, oracles, and such like.

On the other hand, experience testifies what wild work has been made with Religion when once men begin to cry down the use of reason. Whenever headlong zeal and implicit faith gain the ascendant, it becomes an engine of craft, ambition, and spiritual tyranny, a bundle of superstitions and gross absurdities; instead of peace and love and heartfelt solace, it was intended to produce, it changes into a perpetual source of terror, censoriousness, and ill-humour, a fireband of war, animosity, and persecution; it gives admission to troops of witches, fairies, spectres, apparitions, dreams, prognostics, and the idlest follies of paganism; its sacred records are made to receive a mystic interpretation according to the rules of the Cabbala, if that can be called an interpretation which renders them unintelligible or contradictory to common sense; the few forms and ceremonies belonging to it, calculated upon the sensitivo-rational constitution of human nature, turned into a kind of magic operation by charm and conjuration, and this operation strenuously contended for sometimes by men of great learning and honest intentions. This being the case both of Religion and Philosophy when esteemed enemies to one another, discretion will incline us to endeavour an union and partnership between them, that we may draw our advantages from both; taking hints from one for making improvements in the other, and employing the means furnished by one for giving currency to the other.

Nor can we offend against either by this manner of proceeding, for the Gospel was preached to the poor, the sentiments inculcated there were calculated for general use, many things delivered in parables to be heard only by him that hath ears to hear, instructions given, that were capable of various interpretations; as if on purpose to put us upon exerting our sagacity and judgment in discovering their genuine sense by help of our natural lights. Refined speculations, profitable only for particular persons not reckoned among the poor, are left to the investigations of human reason, which we may presume sufficient for the task: therefore as there are no directions given for her assistance therein, so neither are there any prohibitions against taking her course. For though St. Paul warns to beware of the vain babblings of Philosophy, it does not follow from thence, that he would condemn all attention to Philosophy whenever she talks pertinently:

for this would be making him as inconsiderate as the free-thinker, who runs down Religion itself because he has just reason to beware of the vain superstitions in Religion.

But Religion is not always superstitious, nor Philosophy always a babbler, as we may gather from what the same St. Paul tells us concerning the Gentiles, among whom I know of nothing better they had than Philosophy: for he says, God did not leave them without a witness of himself; for the invisible things of him, that is, his external power and Godhead, are seen by the creation, being made manifest in his works. And surely a scene wherein the eternal power and Godhead are displayed, is not unworthy the contemplation even of such as may have other displays of the same. For as we are told that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word which cometh out of the mouth of God: so are we warranted to say upon experience of facts, that the spiritual life is not sustained by the written word alone, but in conjunction with that other word, proceeding from the same mouth, exhibited upon the face of nature in characters legible by human understanding.

22. Then if we regard the interest of Philosophy, and the interest of mankind, there is no cause to fear they should receive damage by joining Religion to co-operate with reason. The best policied and most flourishing states have been remarkable for their attachment to the forms of belief and modes of worship established among them, and in proportion as these lost their credit, they fell into confusion and decay. This we may learn from historians, particularly Polybius, one of the most judicious and clearest from superstition among them, who attributes the then disjointed condition of the Greeks to their contempt for the sacredness of an oath: and Cicero, in his treatise upon the laws, ascribes the vigour of the Roman commonwealth to their veneration for auguries, and other public or family ceremonies received from their ancestors. If we would take example from the Philosophers, we shall find that Pythagoras, Socrates, and others of the soundest, were no ridiculers of established doctrines or forms of worship, but strove to turn them to profitable uses, and lead men by popular opinions into such sentiments of philosophy as they were capable of receiving: and often endeavoured by Mythology to allegorize the Gods into the powers of Nature, affections of the mind and moral virtues; of which we have given specimens in Eros and Eris, the Thalassian and Uranian Venus.

How then do we imagine Pythagoras or Socrates would behave were they now to rise up amongst us? would they undertake to prove Christianity not mysterious, or as old as the creation, or to undermine the grounds and reasons of literal prophecy? would they perpetually affright men with the dangers of priestcraft, affect to ridicule everything esteemed sacred, puzzle the ignorant with their archness, or unsettle the minds of the vulgar with their witticisms? Pythagoras you may think was a solemn old don, and so might not care to deal in joking for want of a talent that way; for it is a favourite position with our moderns, that every man loves a joke, even in argumentation, if he be able to make one; and they quote Elijah for a precedent, who joked upon the four hundred priests of Baal. Nevertheless, Socrates was an exception to this rule, for you must allow him a man of as much wit and humour as ever lived; yet he knew how to be merry and wise, when to be witty and when to forbear, nor ever suffered his humour to outrun his discretion, but attended to the check of his Demon upon every present impulse.

Therefore he never attempted to bring the priests or their oracles into contempt, to discredit the Eleusinian mysteries, nor abuse the Gods or their images. Neither did he strive to unsettle anybody in their notions, unless when standing in the way of something more solid he wanted to introduce: for he always had regard to the Cui bono, the consequences to the party or the public, and aimed not so much to teach, as to put his scholar in a way how to find out for himself. So he was not positive nor dogmatical, nor fond of that expression so much affected now-a-days by some folks, I will venture to say, for he never ventured to say anything except one, which was, that he knew nothing, but only professed to practise his mother's art of midwifery by delivering other persons he saw labouring with thoughts that could not find an issue: his method was to start doubts and objections innumerable, not with design to leave things in uncertainty, but in order that by the workings of them in the mind, the hearer might be delivered of something steady, certain, and salutary. How then can we better imitate him than by seeking a rational construction of all the popular doctrines, which when found may justly be presumed the genuine sense intended to be conveyed by the teacher? for this is no more than every private man is entitled to, that his words should be understood in the best sense they are capable of bearing.

And we have the better encouragement to this method of proceeding, because the materials we have to work upon are more easily susceptible of a useful interpretation, than any vulgar opinions Socrates had to do with. How many excellent discourses have we on morality, so interlarded with texts as to contain little else beside the threads of connection joining them into a regular piece? but who could do the like with any system of opinions current among the vulgar in Greece or Rome? who could make an instructive, moral discourse with quotation out of Ovid's Metamorphoses, which I know not whether it may not be regarded as the Bible of Paganism? Perhaps some very good reflections might be picked up from thence here and there; but every part of our Bible has been made use of at some time or other, to enforce the moral duties and principles of natural Religion: even the marvellous part shave been serviceably applied that way, but what could you do with the marvellous in Ovid?

23. As to what there is of form and discipline, deference to authority, and peculiar articles of Faith distinct from those of sound Philosophy, for they may be distinct without being opposite or hurtful thereto, it will become us to study carefully their several uses and natural tendency, as a physician would his materia medica; and likewise the condition of human nature, and characters of our cotemporaries, as he does the constitution of his patient, in order to see to what services they may be profitably applied, and what dangers of misapplication are to be guarded against. If we perceive any turning them into unintelligible mysteries, or ascribing to them an intrinsic value and efficacy, or conceiving them to operate in the way of magic, charm, and conjuration, it would be a good deed to prevent it as there is opportunity; still having a regard to what is feasible as well as what is right in theory, and not persisting madly to kick against the pricks.

But we must not be too rigorous in this point, for neither the illiterate nor learned vulgar can always trace the connection between causes and effects a little remote, nor discern the uses and natural consequences of things recommended upon good authority, yet they will imagine a reason where they see none; in which case they unavoidably mingle a spice of charm and conjuration in their system: this it will be prudent to remove gently by such management as they have calmness and capacity to bear.

But we must not expect to remove it entirely, nor is it always necessary we should; for there are some minds which cannot do without it, and to such it will not be hurtful.

I have observed in a former place that superstition is relative, the same conceptions being innocent and profitable to one man, which would be superstitious in another: how gross soever they be, yet if they are the purest he can entertain upon the subject, they are the properest for him. There are some rules and observances very useful for such as cannot discern their uses; the main point is to gain a reception of them, by pointing out their expedience where we can make it understood, where we cannot, by any other method feasible. Therefore the weakly pious, or learned man, who persuades himself that God has infused a magical virtue into certain ceremonies and compositions of matter, is less hurtful either to himself or to the public, than the free-thinker, who shrewdly finding out there can be no intrinsic value in them, denies them any value at all, because he has not calmness or sagacity enough to trace out their expedience.

If I might be permitted to propose a medium, I would recommend that whatever we apprehend commanded by God, which we should otherwise have thought useless and trifling, should be received in the same idea as we do the recipes of a physician: we do not imagine him putting a virtue and efficacy into his drugs they had not before, but skilful to know their qualities, and discerning them to be proper for our constitution and present condition of body; so we take them down as the very things we should have chosen for ourselves, had we as much skill as he. In like manner I apprehend there is nothing irreligious in supposing that God never gives an arbitrary command which has not a prudential foundation in his constitutions of Nature and Providence, nor annexes a virtue and efficacy to things insignificant: but that he knows perfectly the condition of his creatures, what opinions and practices will naturally conduce to our good, and graciously points them out to us where we could not have discovered them: therefore we are to reverence his Wisdom without gainsaying, believing the things enjoined thereby are the very same we should have chosen in prudence of our own accord, had we a full and accurate knowledge of the circumstances we stand in, and how everything would affect us.

And the like presumption may justly prevail in a lower degree with respect to the institutions established by men, which may have a real use founded in human nature, though it may not be readily explained to every ingenuous well-bred gentleman, who demands it at a coffee-house.

By taking things in this light, we shall escape an obstinacy of zeal for old forms, and leave an opening for reformation when they appear manifestly to have an evil tendency: for then we may conclude the command has been misinterpreted, or that it was occasional and temporary, losing its expedience and obligation upon a change in the characters of mankind, in which case it would be as absurd to adhere to it inflexibly, as to continue the regimen prescribed for a fever, when one afterwards falls into a dropsical or paralytic disorder.

24. Some degree of attention to rule and discipline will do hurt to no man, for we have all more or less a mixture of the Angel and of the brute: therefore we must use some management with the brutal faculty, that it may stand ready to assist in the services of reason, or even to do her work at intervals while she lies asleep. I have endeavoured in a former place to show of how great importance it is to have a well-disciplined imagination,

for that is the seat of the habits, the moral senses, and the virtues, which must impel spontaneously to action before they can be pronounced complete: nor do the most salutary convictions of the understanding become a saving Faith, until they have made a lodgement there. But form and custom and ceremony have a great effect upon the imagination to rivet persuasions and sentiments, and may be serviceably employed in rendering speculation practical.

Men of strong reason and much thought may have occasion for less of them than others, yet do they not deserve to be totally neglected, even by such who may find their account in a judicious choice and application of them. However it must be owned that the bulk of mankind, partly by want of capacity, partly by continual engagement to their professions and ways of life, are necessitated to take direction from the inferior faculty: if they use their reason, it is for making application of their rules and principles to particular cases, but the rules and principles themselves they must take from authority and custom: they believe a thing because they never heard it controverted they follow a measure of conduct because they find it practised by everybody of character, having something else to do than pursue the line of expedience up to the original source through all its long and intricate channels. Therefore, if any man thinks he can manage well enough for himself without aid of authority or received customs, still it is an unpardonable selfishness to take no thought for others around him.

But there is a narrowness of Soul too frequently prevailing as well among your great reasoners as your very pious people, which makes them fond of contracting the pale of Salvation, and forward to entertain a contempt and utter neglect of all except a few choice spirits of their own turn. Whereas sound Philosophy and sound Religion recommend a generous universally charitable temper as the most desirable possession and principal characteristic of their professors, and teach that in the most ignorant, despicable, low-minded human creature there lies an immortal Soul capable of happiness in another state, equally with the best bred, the most accomplished or refined. Whoever therefore would approve himself a true Philosopher, as well as he that desires to be a truly religious man, ought to consider his honest neighbours, though not speculatists, and the vulgar, no less than himself; and contribute by his words and example to uphold the sacredness of those forms and principles which may be serviceable to them, though such as he esteems needless and unavailing for his own uses.

Nevertheless, if we could persuade ourselves it were allowable to regard the interests of Philosophy alone, yet are they so liable to be affected by opinions of common currency, that it were prudent to take some care of the latter for sake of the former: for no man ever struck out his own system from the beginning entirely by his own single efforts, but took his rise from some beaten ground already prepared for his use, therefore it is of the utmost consequence what ground he has to take his rise from. The young Philosopher, before he has the benefit of his own judgment, is equipped for his future progress by his parents, his tutors, and the company he happens to fall in amongst: they lead him into acuteness of observation and sound manner of judging upon ordinary things, the idea of an invisible power, the regard to futurity, the laudableness of application with which he makes his subsequent discoveries: according to the principles they instil into him of the few superstitions, sensual tastes, and gross conceptions they inculcate, he has the less to do afterwards, either to ingraft or to eradicate, and the clearer passage before him for making further improvements.

Nor is it practicable to throw off all tincture of the nursery, the schools,

or the dining-room: those who think they have done it most effectually still retain a spice; for it is from thence they annex the ideas of charm and magic to certain forms and ceremonies not joined therewith by the ablest doctors of our Church; from thence they drew all they have positive in Religion, for their peculiar doctrines are barely negative, not to believe a miracle, not to admit a prophecy, not to mind a priest, not to submit to any discipline. They are mighty assiduous in teaching men what they should not do, but nothing of what they should do, unless perhaps to deal with honour in your transactions, to be well-behaved, and to see with your own eyes; and those I suppose the nurse and the priest had bid them be careful of before: if they add anything of their own, it is no more than an extension of the last rule, to see with your own eyes for discerning things that lie out of your sight. Neither when we come from under tuition to act and think for ourselves, can we totally escape the influence of sympathy, but the sentiments and imaginations of the company we consort with will imperceptibly insinuate among our own.

To these causes it must be owing that no great lengths of knowledge are ever run by any persons in barbarous countries, but the greatest proficiency has always been made in the most civilized and best-principled nations; for there is no such difference in soils and lineages as that one may produce science but another not: we live in the same climate inhabited by the painted Britons, who when transported to Rome, were found fit only for hewers of wood and drawers of water; and are descended from them mingled with Saxons, Danes, Normans, and Jutlanders, who knew no better Gods than Thor and Woden, nor other science than war and destruction. Science began to show a few signs of life upon the introduction of Christianity among our ancestors, obscured as it was by Popish superstitions, which rendered it no light but rather darkness visible; then the jargon of school divinity and Aristotle misunderstood occupied the thoughts of the studious. As early as Edward III. there were persons who saw through this veil of darkness, yet could they do little more than discover that it was a veil: but from the Reformation, learning of all kinds, both human and divine, has made a surprising progress, and I hope it is still gaining ground in the long journey towards perfection. In like manner, if we were to search all history, I imagine it would be found that the degree of purity in Religion and soundness in judgment among the speculative has ever borne a proportion to that among the generality, both rising and falling together, because mutually affecting one another.

25. This being the case, it becomes a matter of moment to the most refined what qualified neighbours they have to live amongst: which consideration alone, if there were none more weighty, might incline us to wish them as just sentiments in Religion and morality as they are capable, or willing to entertain: but these things can never be made to prevail generally without aid of forms, ceremonies, customs, and articles received upon authority.

After the freedoms I have used and pains I have taken throughout the foregoing work to view everything in the light of nature, I cannot well be suspected of a fondness for the magical, the marvellous, and mysterious: I am rather apprehensive of having given offence by endeavouring to lessen the mysteries of some points, which were thought to abound in them most copiously. And yet I declare that if I had the tuition of a porter, or even of an honest, sensible fox-hunter disposed to listen to me attentively for seven years, I could not undertake to work in him the persuasions I think it

highly expedient for him to entertain, upon the grounds whereon I build them for myself: therefore esteem it very happy there is a code in credit, for which the sentiments one would wish to infuse do so naturally follow.

What could have been done with the pagan Theology or the Mahometan Koran? we must have worked hard with the transmuting process, and allegorized them into a doctrine never tkought of by the compilers: whereas now we need only clear away the perversities and mystic obscurities, that have overgrown in length of time, and develop the genuine sense intended to be conveyed on the delivery, to produce a regular consistent system agreeable to nature and reason.

The long and intricate deductions of science, worked up with the slender threads of distinction, will never do for common use: the man of business has not time for such piddling work, the polished gentleman is above such dry and musty investigations; so he must take something upon trust from those plodding fellows who have no better taste than for toil and drudgery. It is necessary to shorten the line for his use, by bringing the two ends together without troubling him with the whole length: in which case there is a great chance but he will annex some idea of charm or magic virtue, because an efficacy seems to jump at once from the cause to a remote effect, wherewith it has no apparent nor immediate connection.

Nor is he singular in these imaginations, for one may observe the like in the profound and the speculative; how currently do we talk of Nature and Chance, and think we clearly understand these terms because they are in everybody's mouth! Some who would be thought the deepest reasoners, have made them First Causes, and the soundest of very early Philosophers, though they admitted a God, seem to have supposed him an offspring of Nature, or at least that the materials he had to work upon were of her property. But what is Chance considered as a first mover, or Nature as an original sustainer of ignorance? They are no substances, they are no Beings, they are powers without an agent, qualities without a subject; an idea as inexplicable to the full as any virtues supposed inherent in sacred rites; why then should we think one a more absurd and ridiculous notion, or more pernicious to be entertained than the other, so as to set ourselves to eradicate it at all events?

I would not take pains to persuade anybody that God has annexed an extraordinary virtue or efficacy to any form, ceremony, place, day, or assent to some speculative proposition, which he had not given them in his original constitution of nature and plan of providence respecting the moral world, for to inculcate such persuasion would be dealing insincerely: I would endeavour to study human nature, particularly the sensitive faculty, seat of the apprehensions, habits, and affections; observe carefully their remotest tendencies and influence upon one another, and what opinions or practices might be applied most for the benefit of mankind, as bringing them nearest to a just sentiment of God, a satisfaction of mind within themselves, and a mutual charity among one another. Whatever I judged most conducive to those purposes, all circumstances considered, I would recommend, or join in my vote with those who had already recommended it; explaining my own idea by the chain of natural consequences where I could, for I should always wish to do as much by reason as possible; but where I found this impracticable, then having recourse to authority or general estimation enforcing it as matter of duty, the due performance whereof will draw down the blessing of God. If anybody of his own accord will annex the idea of a supernatural virtue or efficacy, I should be cautious of contradicting him.

while there was a hazard that he might thereby lose the idea of any duty or advisableness at all: for I am for leaving every one to his own notions, unless upon a probability of exchanging them for better. To do otherwise, though too commonly practised, seems to me as inconsiderate, as if upon seeing your neighbour live in an ill-built incommodious house, you shall beat it about his ears, without supplying him with materials, or furnishing him a plan to build another.

26. Thus I have endeavoured to make it appear, how God, by the provisions of his Wisdom, has raised up the two trees of knowledge, Philosophy, and Religion, from little seeds, by slow and successive gradations, and how apt they are, by their mutual influence, to purify and meliorate each other: for when set at too great distance apart, Philosophy becomes a vain babbler, and Religion a superstitious enchantress. Therefore it is highly expedient to approximate them as near as possible, that they may engraft into each other by approach: for their juices will mellow by mingling together, their branches grow more vigorous over a larger compass of ground, and bear salubrious fruits of more general use, as being suited for nourishment both of the sensitive and rational faculties.

And our Religion itself seems to point out this method; for it teaches that Man was created perfect, his rational faculties being sufficient for his conduct, that the purpose of the Redemption was to restore him to the condition from whence he had fallen, that is, the perfect enjoyment of those faculties, for I suppose it will not be denied that the blessed Saints above possess them as completely as Adam did, nor that they hold their happiness by the tenure of their obedience. Redemption being the free Grace of God, there is no doubt he could have instated his elect in the full benefits purchased thereby immediately, but he has thought proper to lead them thereinto by a long preparation through the trials and temptations of this world: but what better preparation can they make, than by labouring to raise their rational faculties towards the perfection wherein they were given at the creation, and employing the means and methods prescribed to bring the sensitive under entire command of the others.

During the patriarchal times, the frequent converse of Angels was vouchsafed, but no longer; in the course of the Levitical law, interpretations of dreams, answers by Urim and Thummim, instructions by prophecy, and supernatural appearances gradually ceased; there being still less and less need of application to the senses in proportion as reason gathered strength. Upon the particular occasion of introducing the Gospel, it was necessary that miracles should be revived, but the continuance of them after the Apostles seems a very doubtful fact: the multitude of ceremonies and sacrifices was then abolished, institutions and ordinances reduced to a very few, many things delivered in parables and dark sayings requiring a careful application of the judgment to understand; nor was it expected they should presently work their full effect upon mankind, but promise was given of the Comforter, who should show us all things.

This Comforter then we have among us: from his showing we learn what things of God we know, and by his power are enabled to perform the good things we do. But in what manner does he come? not with signs and wonders, nor by visible descent, nor yet in visions, ecstasies, sudden illuminations, or preternatural feelings: for these are only the waking dreams of enthusiasts; but by working imperceptibly upon our mental organs at a time we know nothing of, perhaps hours or days, or months, anterior to any sensible effect; so the light he sheds seems to us the

discoveries of our own understanding, and the power he infuses appears the exerted effort of our natural strength; nor should we know he had been aiding, otherwise than by the sacred text assuring us that no good thing can be done without him. Therefore when our conscience testifies that we have done a good thing, we may be confident of having had his assistance to invigorate our natural powers, but can never know nor perceive when the touch was given by which they were so invigorated.

Such then being his method of operation, it is our business to endeavour the best improvement of our understanding, and best use of our natural powers, trusting to God to afford us his supernatural assistance when and in what manner he judges proper; but making a judicious application of those means and methods of grace suggested to us, and employing our reason to search for lights in whatever quarter they may be found. For we have now ground to hope, that he will sanctify our Philosophy, provided we take care to restrain it from wandering in idle curiosities, but direct all its winding researches with an ultimate view to advancing that great work of God, the introduction of a sound Faith, a well-grounded Hope, and a hearty universal Charity, among mankind. But we must not expect to perform great matters in a work which is to be the work of thousands in successive generations, each contributing a small share towards the whole; let us then be content to do our best, and we shall not prove deficient: if God had wanted more at our hands, he would have given us larger talents, or greater effusions of his grace: but we are none of us useless in the spot where he has stationed us, every man may make some little addition to those virtues, either among the public, or the few he converses with, or at least in his own mind; and for what little he can do, may trust Providence that it will operate its full proportion towards completing the grand design.

27. For a grand design appears to have been carried on from the earliest accounts of history, by a remarkable course of providence, calculated for the benefit of the human race in general, distinct from that respecting particular persons, and the intention of it to be for introducing a perfect rectitude of sentiment, as well in the understanding as the inferior faculties among mankind: for if this could be effected anywhere, it would make large strides towards extending itself everywhere. We read that God in discourse with Abraham declared, if he should find ten righteous men in Sodom, he would spare the city for the ten righteous' sake: now the rationalist cannot conceive that the All-perfect should act by favour and affection, so as to change the measures his Justice required of him, in consideration of a few persons who had made themselves acceptable in his sight; but that whatever it may be said in popular language God will do, might be said in philosophic language he has actually done, for that there are natural causes already laid in train by the disposition of his providence for bringing it to pass. Therefore he may understand by this text that the exhortations, example, and management of ten perfectly righteous persons would have such an influence upon the conduct of a wicked city, as to render them no objects of divine judgment; and so they would be spared, not by any change in the purposes of God, but by a change in their own characters.

Nor can we say, that experience contradicts this exposition, for we never yet have had any trial of the case: those we call good men having always some mixture of error or frailty in their composition, and it is well known that one little infirmity will stop the good effects of many virtues. There never

was heard of more than one perfect man upon earth, who was made so by union of the divine nature with the human, and his perfection went no farther than himself: for of his chosen disciples one proved a traitor and reprobate, nor were the rest without their misapprehensions and their failings. He preached only to the poor, and his doctrines were afterwards propagated in such manner, as to seem foolishness to the wise of this world; neither were they so complete as not to need the continual assistance of the Comforter for showing those things which could not be learned from them by human sagacity. Yet we cannot suppose them so incomplete, as not fully to answer the purpose intended: from hence and from the event we may conclude, that God still intended to carry on his work by the provisions of Wisdom rather than the operations of Power, and the purpose of this greatest of all interpositions was not to introduce perfection into the world immediately, but only to sow the Seeds of it, which the working of natural causes, assisted by occasional waterings of the Holy Spirit, might bring up in long process of time to full maturity.

Therefore we must look to the courses of Providence regulating the laws of nature, the actions of free agents, an opportune succession of fortuitous events, for establishing the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Neither Religion nor Philosophy can do it without taking assistance from common prudence and discretion in the ordinary transactions of life, without a thorough knowledge of human nature, of the characters and conceptions of men, whereby the measures of conduct for all situations and occasions, tempers, and capacities, may be regularly deduced from the one principle, the Glory of God, or general interest of the creatures; for to make a kingdom perfect, the laws whereby it is governed must be suited to the condition of every member, and exigency of every occasion. But we are too little acquainted either with ourselves or one another, ever to lay out a plan of our whole conduct upon that one bottom, or even to frame a partial plan, that may be alike practicable and serviceable to others as to ourselves: so that appetite, habit, and bodily wants are continually making work for themselves, because having none, or none they can do, assigned them in our system.

The Divine or pious Christian may find enough in his oracles to conduct him safely in the way to his own salvation; the Philosopher may think his science sufficient to lead him in the certain road to his future happiness; but the one can never expect to attain an unsinning obedience, nor the other to become a consummate Wise man: the scheme of opinion and practice drawn by either, though perhaps the best that human infirmity can make it, for his own private use, might prove inconvenient and inexpedient for others; and will probably be too refined and mental for the man of business, the man of taste, the merchant, the mechanic, and the labourer; for every man has something peculiar in his notions, and his needs, which he will strongly recommend as obligatory to his neighbour, and thereby spoil all the good effects he might have worked by his communicable ideas. For we are too hasty in taking up a persuasion that things are good in themselves because we have found benefit by them, without ever considering what they are good for, to whom they are good, and in what cases they are applicable.

But we have a duty arising, as well from the relation we bear to the community as to our Maker, and the things external from whence we receive our pleasures and pains: therefore are not perfectly righteous until we become good neighbours as well as good men, nor is it enough to strike out a complete system of sentiment and action that shall comprehend, not only

our exercises of Religion and virtue, but likewise our common employments, our recreations, and amusements, in such manner as to be practicable; until we have gotten the art of modelling it into various forms accommodated to the several uses of persons we converse with, respectively practicable by each of them, and yielding him as much benefit as in his circumstances he is capable of receiving. This art is so far from having ever yet been discovered, that no doubt it will appear a romantic imagination, like the Philosopher's stone; but it is not uncommon that things extremely difficult in the invention become as easy to be followed when the method is once hit upon.

There seems then to be no difficulty in apprehending, that ten righteous persons qualified as above, if ten such there shall ever be, may assimilate their whole city to themselves, from thence the likeness would spread by a quicker progress over the nation, from the nation to others in alliance therewith, and by their means throughout all mankind. Then it might be said that original sin was wiped away from the earth, and human nature restored to her primitive perfection wherein she came forth from the hands of her Maker; for while needing to be supported in what little good we do by obligatory institutions and supernatural aids, it is not human nature but her assistant powers, that do the work: and from the dispensations of Providence, ordinary and extraordinary, taken notice of in the foregoing pages of this Chapter, may be gathered that their tendency and scope is to raise human nature to its full perfection.

Whenever this shall happen complete, then will be the Millennium, peopled entirely by Saints; which, whether it shall begin in a year marked in our Calendar with a figure of six, or shall last precisely one thousand years, or whether there shall be any deaths therein, or those which happen to be looked upon as acceptable translations to a higher state, like the gentle passage through sleep to morning, vigour, and freshness, need not be inquired: if anybody has a mind to make calculations, let him build upon the degree of purity in sentiment and rectitude of conduct he can find anywhere; for this is more likely ground to go upon than any he can find in the Apocalypse. Though by the way I cannot help wondering how any orthodox person can satisfy himself in presuming to enter upon the discovery of an event whereof it is expressly declared, that no man knoweth the day; no, not the Son, but the Father. In the mean time let us not spend ourselves solely in unavailing prayers of, Lord Jesus, come quickly, but take the spade into our hands and exert our abilities, be they no more than can remove a single mole-hill, to plane the way for his passage. Nor yet need we expect him literally to descend in person, for he cannot be supposed fond of a throne for the grandeur of it: and a monarch will not be wanted for such subjects, disposed to keep order among themselves, as members of one commonwealth, or rather one family, without private views or discordance of sentiment, but united together in brotherly love and unabating charity.

28. From the foregoing sketch of the Divine Economy may be gathered, that there is a general interest of the human species distinct from that of particulars; as in every country there is a national interest, distinct from that of the several members whereof the nation consists. But the public interest ought always to carry the preference before private, therefore the most righteous governors do not scruple measures that lay a hardship upon particular persons, if necessary for the public good: the subjects are pressed into land and sea service, many fortunes are hazarded, many

lives are sacrificed, heavy taxes imposed, to gain possession of an uncultivated territory, from whose returns multitudes of those who have borne the burden will never live to receive a compensation. And all these things are laudable, as well in him that undertakes the service, as in him that enjoins it, while done upon reasonable prospect of a real distant advantage to the nation: for every private man owes his life and fortune to the necessary demands of his country, and the advancement of a public benefit is the proper object of a good politician.

In like manner we find that in the perfect polity of Heaven, the general interest is regarded above all other considerations, and sometimes pursued by the private damage of individuals. We are commanded to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, to bear injuries patiently, to turn the left cheek to him that has smitten the right, to hate father and mother, wife and children, to part with lands and houses, to lay down life itself, thus to break through natural affection and the natural love of self-preservation, for the Gospel's sake. For Christ, who could have no interest of his own to serve, therefore to whom love could only be shown by doing good to his universal Church, declares that whoever loveth not him above all things is not worthy of him.

Nor will heathen Philosophy justify her votaries in pursuing their particular advantage before the general: Pythagoras and Socrates, perhaps the two greatest apostles of human reason that ever lived, suffered martyrdom in her service; their followers professed the same doctrine; even those of them who acted upon private views, never durst avow them: which shows that upon this subject Philosophy has always spoken the same language with Religion. And our moral senses prompt the like way, as appears by that applause which rises spontaneously in every one's breast upon hearing the histories of Regulus or Decius, or other ancient and modern heroes, who have generously sacrificed their lives and fortunes to the public good. But if men were never to act against the impulse of selfishness, still they could not help being serviceable to others by the accidents befalling them: one man's misfortune may give warning to many to escape the danger; experience gained by observations upon his distemper, may point out a remedy for others; and while the enemy is busied in ravaging a frontier, the interior parts may gain time to put themselves in a posture of defence.

The courses of Providence appear calculated for the general advantage without regard to individuals, to whom they prove often unavailing, and sometimes detrimental: the storms that purify the air and keep the ocean from stagnating, occasion many wrecks by sea, and devastations upon land; vicissitudes of weather necessary to produce the fruits of the earth, tear in pieces many crazy constitutions; military, seafaring, and other occupations, without which our lives could not be preserved in safety, nor the accommodations of them procured, subject those who follow them to distresses, diseases, dangers, and frequent destructions; nor do we find entrance into the world without the pains and perils of those who bore us: not a civilized nation upon earth whose constitution and polity did not grow out of wars, conquests, tyrannies, confusions, desolations, and miseries among their ancestors. Even Religion in its progress has given birth to gross superstition, intolerable terrors and anxieties, to craft, oppressions, and persecutions: and Philosophy tended to confound the understandings of men, turning them aside from everything useful to follow vain curiosities, making them distrust the evidence of their senses, or driving them into downright Atheism. For many ages have those two trees of knowledge

been confined to narrow corners of the earth, where the far greater part of mankind never come within their shadow: and even to this day there are many savages and children cut off in their infancy, who do not appear to have reaped benefit from either; nor do the best of us enjoy the full effect which may be expected from them, when grown to their destined perfection. From hence we conclude the eye of Providence fixes attentively upon perfecting human nature, without looking upon any good or evil of particular persons not lying in the line therewith.

29. Shall we then say with the Stoics, that God cares for great things but neglects the small? that his providence is over the human race? over empires or nations, but not over single persons? We do not say this of an earthly politician, if we believe him a righteous one; for we suppose he will consult the benefit of a few or of a single man, where it can be done consistently with the public good; and whenever he pursues the latter by damage to the former, he will wish to make him amends. Therefore there are honours and rewards for those who have served their country, reliefs for those who have suffered in the service; we have Chelsea and Greenwich hospitals for the sick and maimed, pensions for the widows of such as have been slain, and if it were necessary to pull down any man's house for repelling an invasion, I do not doubt but the public would make up the loss; for our legislature will not suffer a foot of ground to be taken away for widening a turnpike road without an adequate compensation in value to the owner.

But all services are not repaid, nor all burdens and damages compensated, for this is impracticable; therefore the politician stands fully excused by his inability: for if he had the power of restoring life and limb, and if the public revenues sufficed to repay every farthing of all that had been called for in times of public exigency, it is to be presumed he would suffer no man to remain a loser who had in any manner contributed thereto. But with God there is no inability, for he has all creatures and their fortunes, in all stages of being, at his disposal: why then should we doubt the righteous judge of heaven and earth will do completely, what we conceive a righteous man would do so far as lay in his power? Religion, no more than human reason, affords us the least ground to doubt of it, for we are taught, He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it: but Religion being preached to the poor, must accommodate itself to the conceptions of the poor, therefore the recompense is represented as a voluntary reward to be conferred by a future act of God, who after a formal judgment of mankind, will say to the righteous, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Whereas Philosophy may suggest to him that hath ears to hear, that God being the First Cause of all powers, motions, and events, and having unlimited Omniscience and infinite Wisdom, may, on forming a system of nature, lay out all the parts of it in such disposition as to bring forth every good and evil his goodness and equity require, by an unerring train of consequences, so as that a reward may certainly follow a hundred years hence from an act of God performed thousands of years ago.

Nevertheless, this is too large an idea for the illiterate or learned vulgar, who understand by nature no more than the powers and properties of visible bodies, animals, vegetables, minerals, fossils, the action of the elements, the laws of gravitation, attraction, and impulse, and other objects of physiological science: or at most include therein the transactions of men in their policy, their commerce, and mutual dealings with one another. Now in such a

narrow view of nature, as beheld by those who can no more handle the telescope than the microscope, it is impossible to conceive how natural causes can operate upon a man after dissolution of his animal frame, when he ceases to be a physiological being; but whatever passes with him in his next state of existence must be supernatural and miraculous. Therefore, as I have observed before, in § 25, it is necessary for common use to shorten the line by bringing the two ends to meet, the act of God with the effect produced upon the creature; and representing the reward as a new donation of blessings, for which there are no causes yet in being from whence they could ensue. Nor is this a prevarication or concealment of the truth, it is only the translation of it into a language intelligible by the populace: for the belief that an ample reward lies in store for every labour and suffering in a righteous cause, I take to be the fundamental article, which whoever holds with a firm habitual persuasion, possesses so much of the saving faith: in this the Philosopher is sincere and unanimous with the plain Christian. As to the manner wherein the reward is brought to pass, whether by a long and complicated provision of causes already made tending to that effect, or by a dispensation to be made hereafter for the purpose, seems not so material: therefore he will be careful to inculcate the main point upon each man in such manner as may be most suitable to his comprehension, or consonant to his reason.

30. But when taking the telescope in hand, he will discern by the imperfections and wastes appearing in visible Nature, that it is the part only of a larger system, which, like the corner of a magnificent building, will appear broken and incomplete, or in some of its members superfluous, when seen apart from the rest. He will consider likewise that what supernatural works are recorded, were given for signs and wonders to awaken mankind, not for any necessary uses which could not have been otherwise answered in the things whereon they were operated: and as the courses of Providence are carried on here by the instrumentality of secondary agents, he will take this world for a sample of the Whole, presuming that events throughout the universe are conducted by the contrivances of Wisdom rather than the operations of Power, unless occasionally so far as may be requisite for manifestation of the divine dominion to intelligent creatures. And he will see that reward is propounded only for good deeds and voluntary sufferings, whereas there are many mischiefs brought upon particular persons, without their own act or consent, by the courses of Providence tending to the general good, for which equity requires there should be a compensation.

From these and other considerations he may be apt to stand persuaded there is a universal Nature, comprehending things visible and invisible proceeding by stated Laws steady as those of Matter, connecting the several systems under one established polity, administered like that below by the instrumentality of secondary agents, that by those laws the particular Spirits are assigned to their respective bodies before birth, their passages from one state of being to another regulated, their fates and fortunes therein ascertained. Conformably to this idea, and to the observations herein before made upon the administration of affairs in the moral world, he may conclude that the grand scheme of Providence tends to raise human nature to the full perfection which it was proved to fall short of by Adam's transgression, and that everything passing here below conduces in some shape or other to that end.

But to prevent being misunderstood, I must give notice that I here take human nature in a larger sense than commonly understood, extending it to

the Hades or region of departed Souls, which I suppose still remain specifically different from Angels or other invisible creatures, as they were from birds, beasts, or other animals; therefore have a distinct Nature of their own, which I beg leave for the present to call the Human; and that this specific difference depends upon some small remains of the former composition whereto they still continue vitally united, which may have received alterations in its form and texture by what had passed with them upon earth. Now the perfection of human nature seems necessary to instate the partakers of it in happiness: for though, God be thanked, we have many enjoyments, and those generally more or less in proportion to our good conduct, yet are they mingled with many troubles, nor do the righteous always fare better than the wicked, neither are any exempt from the hazard of evils heavy enough to make the best of us imperfect creatures miserable; therefore we are none of us in a state that can be pronounced absolutely happy.

For as the Stoics called all men fools and mad, because alike destitute of that thorough love of rectitude wherein they placed the essence of wisdom, although they allowed that some approached much nearer thereto than others; and they employed the comparison of a man under water, who being holden an inch below the surface, was nearer the fresh air, but nevertheless as much in a state of drowning as another plunged twenty fathom deep, so we frail mortals, although some be plunged deeper in imperfection than others, yet are all alike liable to the mischiefs of it, until the moment of our emersion, upon which we shall at once commence happy creatures. This emersion then of human nature from the floods of corruption, appears to be the aim whereto all the dispensations of Providence have respect; for we have seen that the sentiments and transactions of mankind cast an influence upon one another, nearly or remotely, though in a manner we cannot always trace out: whence may be presumed that whatever passes upon earth, was calculated for producing those ten righteous persons spoken of above, whose wisdom and example will quickly raise such others of their species as have communion with them into the pure salubrious air of perfection, wherein they shall remain uninterruptedly and invariably happy, liable to no disquietudes, endangered by no temptations.

31. This state of human nature, totally discharged from all remains of original sin or sinfulness, and the miseries attendant thereupon, has been figured by the Millennium or kingdom of the just: which, whether it shall happen before or after the conflagration, or be introduced at all upon earth, or whether we may exactly determine its duration by the name given to it, are to my thinking matters of mere speculation. The term Millennium implies that it will not be perpetual, but succeeded by a third state of being still beyond, wherein we shall cease to be human creatures in any sense of the word, becoming specifically the same with that company among whom we are received. Which seems to favour our hypothesis of the Mundane Soul, whereinto human nature being absorbed, the members of it will become incorporated in the universal host of separate Spirits vitally united to no material substance whatever. And this I take to be a matter of importance; because by it alone can be explained how Equity may be fully satisfied, notwithstanding great inequalities during the states of animal life, and of the Millennium.

But that the kingdom of the just, reinstated in the gross bodies they formerly possessed, should be established here upon earth, stands liable to

great difficulties: for how narrow soever you may contract the pale of salvation for grown persons, you cannot well exclude children dying in innocence, before birth, or under seven years old, amounting to above half the species in all successive generations; and it is hard to conceive how the earth, however new modelled, can commodiously maintain such a prodigious multitude of inhabitants. Besides, that the tender frame of our bodies, liable to a thousand disasters, is but ill suited to a state of security from all mischiefs and dangers: or if you say that the elements will be changed, so as to contain nothing noxious to life or health, then is the happiness not owing to the perfection of human nature but of the external, which we do not find the courses of Providence tending to complete. Nor need we be solicitous for the place where this kingdom shall lie, for happiness is happiness wherever found, whether upon earth or under ground, in the Sun, or in the Moon, in the air or the fields of ether; while we have a reasonable hope that God intends to raise our nature to perfection and happiness, we may trust him to find a convenient spot where we shall enjoy it fully, and that without a miracle or change of his laws established for the material world.

Nevertheless, though I have supposed that when perfection takes place in ten righteous persons, it will quickly spread itself throughout the whole community, it may be remembered that there are degrees of happiness, so that those who shall inhabit the kingdom of the just may be all happy, and yet differ from one another in the intenseness of their enjoyments, according to their several former preparations, as one star differeth from another star in glory: besides that we know not how long it may be before that kingdom takes place.

I have offered reasons in the Chapter on Redemption to show that in this life we are only made redeemable, not actually redeemed; that multitudes pass off this earthly stage without ever having an opportunity of entering the way of salvation: and that from the article in our Creeds concerning the descent of the united Christ into Hades, it follows that something was done there towards completing the Redemption of mankind: from whence it may be presumed there is a tree of perfection gradually nourishing up by the courses of Providence, in the next World as in the present. And until arrived at full maturity there may still be pains and troubles, greater or less, according to their management of themselves here, even among those who are to be partakers in the kingdom of the just.

I thought proper to make this remark, because it may have a good influence upon our conduct in life, on which I would ever keep an eye in all my speculations; for if there be degrees both of reward and punishment, if the righteous shall differ like one star from another in glory, and he that offendeth much shall be beaten with many stripes, but he that offendeth little with fewer stripes, there is an encouragement for every little advance towards virtue. The good will be incited to continual vigilance, not only because it behoveth him that thinketh he standeth to take heed lest he fall, but because every smallest step he can make higher than the level where he now stands will be an advantage gained: and the wicked, though he should not be able to rid himself of all his vices, yet may find it worth while to endeavour removing some of them, as he will thereby procure an abatement of his punishment. Neither do I apprehend it dangerous to good manners, if it were believed that the failings of the best men will be attended with some future inconveniences, therefore have supposed in my Hypothesis of the Vehicles, that every one carries some terrene concretions with him,

which will prove extremely troublesome until he can get them discharged. For the doctrine of a Purgatory seems innocent in itself, or rather salubrious, to keep men vigilant as well in lesser matters, as in securing the main chance: it is only the absurd notion annexed thereto, of praying or buying souls out of purgatory, that renders it a heresy repugnant to reason, to Religion, and to common sense.

32. Upon the foregoing representation made of the kingdom of the just, it is apparent, that God in caring for great things does not neglect the small, nor overlooks single persons in the very steps he takes for perfecting the human race. For since the happiness of that kingdom will extend to every individual member thereof, whatever is done towards introducing the kingdom is done for the benefit of every one who shall become a member: so that when God brings afflictions upon the righteous by the dispensations of his providence for promoting the grand design, he acts more graciously for the sufferer than if he had warded him from them. Hence likewise may be understood how private interest is contained in the general: because none of us can be happy until all are so by our common nature being perfected. Therefore he that suffers voluntarily in a righteous cause, manages most prudently for his own private interest: for he purchases the reversion of an immense estate by a present payment far inferior in value, and contributes to shorten the remoteness of the reversion, or in Scripture language to hasten the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Nevertheless, the plan of Providence contains a multitude of works; there is wheel within wheel, having each their several uses, yet so admirably adjusted as not to interfere with the principal design. For though nothing be omitted proper for conducing to the general interest, yet there are likewise particular providences respecting nations, and families, and private persons, procuring them their prosperities, their supports, and their enjoyments, their deliverances, their protections, and their reliefs: as experience may convince any one, who will bestow a little careful observation upon what passes within his own knowledge. So that we may reasonably believe there is not a single pleasure withholden, which could have been given without detriment to higher designs; and the smallest things, though certainly they must give preference to the greater, not neglected through want of attention.

33. Upon occasion of the divine care extending to the smallest things, I shall venture to put in a word on behalf of our younger brethren of the brutal species: yet it is with fear and trepidation, lest I should offend the delicacy of our imperial race, who may think it treason against their high pre-eminence and dignity, to raise a doubt of their engrossing the sole care of Heaven. I shall not allege that Nature has provided the animals with accommodations for breeding, for harbouring, for feeding; because it will be said these were given for our sakes, to fit them for our services. But let it be considered, that by those very services, they become remotely instrumental to our salvation: for how could the Divine or the Philosopher perform the part allotted him in carrying on that great work, without the sustenance, the clothing, the other conveniences, he draws from the irrational tribes? or at least if he could, it is a fact that he does not, and therefore something is owing to them for the help they give him in his principal concern. Besides, it has been shown in the foregoing pages, that the plan of Providence for perfecting human nature does not stand confined to the operations of Religion and Philosophy, for the polity of nations, the characters and transactions of the people, have their share in the work: and the com

merce, manufactures, and employments, influencing those things, derive many of their materials and receive much of their assistance from the inferior creatures.

Then for the orthodox, with whom I am likely to have somewhat more difficulty upon this subject than with the reasoner, I beg them to consider, that oxen, lambs, goats, and doves, have by express command of God been slaughtered for atonements and sacrifices, and made subservient to the uses of Religion. Since then as well by his special injunctions as by his ordinary providence, he calls upon the creatures for their labours, their sufferings, and their lives, in the progress of his great work of the Redemption, why should we think it an impeachment of his equity, if he assigns them wages for all they undergo in this important service? or an impeachment of his Power and of his Wisdom, if such wages accrue to them by certain stated laws of universal Nature running through both Worlds.

In what manner the compensation is operated would be needless and impossible to ascertain: perhaps they stand only one stage behind us in the journey through matter, and as we hope to rise from sensitivo-rational creatures to purely rational, so they may be advanced from sensitive to sensitivo-rational. And when our nature is perfected, we may be employed to act as guardian Angels for assisting them in the improvement of their new faculties, becoming lords and not tyrants of our new world, and exercising government by employing our superior skill and power for the benefit of the governed: by which way may be comprehended how they may have an interest of their own in everything relative to the forwarding our Redemption. Yet it is not necessary they must have bodies shaped, limbed, and sized exactly like ours: for the treasures of wisdom are not so scanty as that we should pronounce with Epicurus, there can be no spice of reason or reflection except in a human figure, and upon the surface of an Earth circumstanced just like this we inhabit.

No doubt it will appear a wild and absurd imagination to fancy that a dog can ever be made to think and reason like a man, and so indeed it may be while you take your idea of the creature from his hairy hide, his long tail, his lolling tongue, and gross organs of sense; but it is as absurd to suppose you can ever teach a sucking child the mathematics; yet the child may grow to be a man, and then become capable of the sciences. Nor is it easy to conceive how a man, while consisting of an unwieldy body, with a variety of discordant humours circulating therein, can become purely rational, perfectly happy, secure from all dangers, proof against all temptations; yet we hope that man shall one day rise to the condition of an Angel: then by Man must not be understood his whole composition, but some internal part which when disjoined from the rest, will still continue to be him: and how know we what internal part may belong to other animals, capable of higher faculties than they now can exercise? When the caterpillar changes into a butterfly, we easily apprehend it to be the same creature, with larger powers than it had before, and if we knew the worm had passed its time in uneasiness, but the fly in a greater degree of pleasure, we should acknowledge the enjoyments of the one a compensation for the troubles of the other, both being numerically the same.

But when the butterfly dies, we see no Chrysalis left behind, yet we are not to think everything absolutely lost that is gone beyond the reach of our senses: there may still remain an imperceptible Chrysalis, from whence will issue another fly with powers superior to the former; and while the

same perceptive individual passes through all these changes, it will continue the same creature, notwithstanding ever so many alterations in the external form and substance. If you grant but that a dog feels me when I pinch him by the tail, this is enough to prove that he has a personality, and that what feels the pinch is an individual; for perceptivity cannot belong to a compound, any otherwise than as the other component parts may serve for channels of conveyance to some one which receives the perception entire; and in whatever different compounds this individual resides, they are successively the same percipient. Nor is the case otherwise with ourselves: for, as has been already observed in the Chapter on the Trinity, personality and identity belong properly to Spirit; Matter has none of its own, but assumes a borrowed personality from the particular Spirit whereto it happens to stand united.

We all apprehend ourselves continuing the same persons from the cradle to the grave, notwithstanding that many believe all the corporeal particles belonging to us change every seven years; because the same percipient abiding with us throughout makes every fresh set of them become a part of ourselves for the time, while adhering to us, and serving for our uses. And the personal identity, currently believed to continue through life in the brutes, rests upon the same bottom with our own: every child who reads the fable of the Old Lion buffeted about by the beasts in revenge for the tyrannies he had exercised over them in his youth, acknowledges he deserved the punishment. But punishment is not ordinarily esteemed just, unless inflicted upon the very party offending; therefore the whelp, the young, and the decrepit Lion, is conceived all along the same identical creature: but this identity must depend upon the feeling part, for the corporeal composition may be supposed to fluctuate and change as ours does.

We have no knowledge of other percipients unless by means of their appearance and discernible actions, therefore cannot know what other powers they might not exert, if they had other instruments to serve them: we are ready enough to think that if we had as good a nose as the hound, we could distinguish scents as well as he; or if we had the wings and piercing optics of the vulture, we could soar aloft, and discern objects as far: what then should hinder but those creatures had our nice texture of brain, they might make as good use of it as we do? or what evidence is there in experience or reason to prove that every perceptive individual is not capable of receiving whatever perceptions any organization, vitally united thereto, is capable of conveying? Our physiological science does not extend to the laws of Universal Nature governing the worlds unseen, we must take our conceptions of them from our ideas of the divine Attributes; and the boundless Goodness of God is no slight evidence to persuade us that his Mercy spreads over all his perceptive creatures to whom he has given an individuality, rendering them unperishable, and that he has provided laws among his second causes which will raise them gradually from a more abject condition to higher faculties, and higher degrees of enjoyment. From whence it seems probable there is a general interest of animals, comprehending that of all other species together with the human.

I shall not scruple to own that, however this point be determined, it will make no difference in our treatment of the animals; therefore the generality of mankind, to whom it can be of no benefit for their direction in the conduct of life, are welcome to reject it with ridicule and exclamation at the strangeness of the thought; but for such as like to handle the Telescope, to attempt excursions into the boundless regions of universal Nature,

and can find a use in speculation for warming and enlarging their hearts, it may prove not unavailing. For my own part, I place my hopes, not so much in any supposed pre-eminence of my present nature, nor merits of my person, as in the riches of the divine Bounty: and the farther I can persuade myself that Bounty extends, the higher rise my hopes. My principal solicitude is for the fate of the human species, because being one of the number composing it; but if that be secured, if God design me an elder brother's portion, I care not how many of our younger brethren he destines to receive the like: for I have so high an opinion of his inexhaustible treasures, as to lie under no apprehension, lest he should be forced to abate from my share in order to make up for theirs. Besides, that a good-natured man, who knows what slaughters and hard services the animals are put to for our necessary uses, in some whereof he is forced himself to give a reluctant hand, will feel a satisfaction in having room to imagine their interests so connected with ours, that whatever advances the one must advance the other, and all they do or suffer for our benefit, will in the long run redound to their own.

34. I have now endeavoured to show that there is a general interest of the human species promoted by everything happening among particulars; and in the last section have hazarded an attempt to extend that general interest to the animals: in which interest of the whole society or Genus, the good of individuals is contained; so that every one contributing by his labour or his suffering, whether designedly or accidentally, to the common good, works therein most effectually for his own benefit. But though it be better for all individuals, as things stand circumstanced, that whatever passes among them should pass in the manner it does, yet we cannot pronounce it better, either for the whole or individuals, that things should stand so circumstanced. Our nature being in a state of degradation, everything that contributes to improve our condition, is certainly a blessing; but we cannot say it was for our sakes that God has placed us in this degraded state. None can deny his almighty power to have made us at first a kingdom of the just, nor to have given us our nature originally in the same perfection, superior to all force of temptation, whereto we believe it capable of being raised: neither that the inferior animals might have been formed at once with the highest faculties they shall ever arrive to.

Besides, when we comprehend the good of all individuals under that of the species, this must be understood with some exception: for Religion assures us there are wicked creatures, who shall never inherit a portion in the kingdom of the just; and though the light of Nature does not shine so strong as that we can read it by the particle Never, yet it shows there must be miseries grievous enough to make it glaringly apparent, that the wicked have managed very imprudently for their own interests, nor can it discover any certain limitations, either in weight or duration, of those miseries. But can we pronounce it impossible that the evil courses bringing on those miseries, could have been prevented; or deny that men's characters depend upon the bodily and mental organization, the company and situation of life wherein Providence has placed them?

I am far from believing that God impels any man to sin, but whoever commits it is drawn thereinto by his own lusts: for it is of the very essence of sin that it be a free act of the Will, done with discernment of its being wrong; for the very same act performed through ignorance or by compulsion of necessary causes, would be no sin. But I have already

shown in the Chapter on Freewill, that the turns of our Volition depend upon motives thrown in by antecedent causes, and though some of those causes may have been influenced by our former good or ill management, yet were we determined in like manner to that management by other prior motives; so that our whole tenor of conduct derives originally from the action of external causes. But lest I may be thought singular and heterodox in that notion, let us have recourse to the common opinions: do not we all esteem it a blessing that we were born within the pale of salvation, that we have had a good education, have fallen into good company, that there are divine services, and sermons, and good books to resort to; and do not we think ourselves forwarded in our way to future happiness by these means being put into our hands? or that we might not have entered upon the way at all, had we been utterly destitute of them? Yet our birth, our education, our company, our services, sermons, and books, were no acts of ours, they were the bounteous gifts of Providence: but how were they blessings, if we should have made as good use of our Freewill without them? for it is by the acts of our Volition, not by the size of our talents, or measure of our accidental improvements, that we fix our future fate.

On the other hand, how many poor wretches fill our jails, that have been bred up from their cradle in all manner of vice and villany? We do not think them fit members for the kingdom of the just, yet were they led into their evil courses unavoidably, nor ought we to judge it improbable that some of them might have proved saints, had they been favoured with all the same advantages that we have. Or shall we say they might not still be rescued from the dominion of sin by him who was able of the very stones to raise up children unto Abraham; or if that were impossible, could he not have taken them away in their infancy, while yet in their innocence. Add further, that we ascribe the proneness to offence, and unruliness of inordinate desires prevailing in us all, to the fatal effects of original sin: but who shall presume to say the methods taken for purging off those effects would not have availed to prevent them? Is the efficacy of the divine Persons so confined as that it could operate only upon certain particular subjects? If then the Son had been pleased to unite himself to Adam instead of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit descended as powerfully upon his immediate descendants as upon the Apostles, the first temptation might have been resisted, we might all have been born in Paradise, and passed a life of unsinning obedience.

Since then God has permitted the fall of the whole human species, has suffered some to stand in a situation from whence there is no chance but they will take the road of destruction, and leads the most favoured through many troubles and long stages of imperfection to the kingdom of the just; we may conclude there is some wise and gracious purpose in all these things. For it is incongruous with our idea of his Goodness, his Righteousness, and his Holiness, to imagine that the courses of his Providence, either in Nature or Fortune, ever bring on any physical, or permit any moral evil, unless for some greater good to result therefrom. Now we cannot think it for the good of the human species, or the animal Genus, the perfection whereto their natures are destined should be so long delayed, nor that the miry road of labour, trouble, suffering, and imperfection, should be made the necessary passage thereto; much less that numbers of them should never attain it at all, but remain objects of punishment whereof we can see no end: therefore the good must redound elsewhere, but where else shall we trace it? It cannot accrue to our Maker himself, for he receives no

accession of happiness from whatever passes among his creatures: the benefit then must accrue to the host of pure Spirits disunited from all corporeal mixture whatever, heretofore called the Mundane Soul.

In what manner it accrues we have not materials enow in experience, the basis of all our science, to explain; so far as conjecture can go, I have already offered my sentiments in former Chapters: but we may certainly conclude, if anything can be concluded with certainty from the character of our Almighty Governor we draw from experience of his works, that all the labours and troubles, imperfections, diminutions of happiness, suspensions of sense by sleep, distempers, or otherwise, all the sufferings and miseries of this world and the next, serve to some uses of invisible beings, and are necessary to complete their happiness: from whence it follows, that they have an interest in whatever passes here below, as well upon the earth as in the Hades. Therefore the evils sustained by creatures consisting of a grosser or finer material composition are important services to others, who are free from that imprisonment: but the imprisonment subjecting them to those evils, we must acknowledge to have been brought about by the provisions of Heaven, the laws of universal Nature. Can we then harbour a suspicion that the righteous Judge of heaven and earth will suffer his universal laws to exact a service from any creature, without assigning him competent wages; or imprison some of his children for the benefit of the rest, without an adequate compensation? or can we doubt that the Fountain of all powers, the Author of all Nature, who carries on his works here by second causes, proceeding upon certain stated rules, was able to insure the wages and the compensation by the like methods? Now the most obvious way we can conceive the compensation consequential upon the services, is by the creatures performing them being, upon dissolution of their material integuments, admitted into the society of beings purely spiritual: in which case they will be sharers in the advantages they have been made to work out for the spiritual nature, and partake of that happiness they had been employed by their sufferings to support.

35. It may seem incredible that the same creature can ever be made to participate in natures so widely opposite: but let us reflect a little upon what is currently holden by the most orthodox. We believe that a human fœtus just felt alive by the mother, though showing no more signs of sense than an oyster or sensitive plant, may rise to an equality with the Angels. We believe that every damned Soul in hell was capable of becoming a glorified saint, if he had taken the right methods during his abode upon earth. Even Wesley and Whitefield believe that by their terrors and rantings, they have rescued many a hardened wretch who without their aid would have gone in the certain road to perdition; and if they could teach the Gospel in Tartary, they should rescue many who now will perish eternally: so the salvation of their penitents depended upon their good fortune in bringing such powerful Apostles to instruct them. We believe likewise that Angels and Archangels have fallen to a state of degradation below that of men and animals: for I think any man in his senses would choose to be an ass, an oyster, or a beetle, rather than a Devil, and esteem it a less debasement of his nature. Thus we see, that, agreeably to our common notions, the highest natures and the lowest may be exchanged for each other: and that every perceptive individual is capable of being invested with any of them, according as the laws of Providence, governing the natural and moral universe, shall cast them upon him.

Nevertheless, the exchange spoken of above may be thought contradictory to Scripture, and this is enough to overthrow all other arguments that can be alleged in support of it: but let us consider in what Spirit the Scriptures are to be consulted, for we are told the letter killeth, it is the Spirit that maketh alive. There are texts whose literal tenor declare expressly against the rotundity of the Earth and the Copernican System, insomuch that Gallileo was forced to recant them formally by the infallible Vicar of Christ under pain of excommunication: yet those opinions now maintain their ground, even among persons who have the highest veneration for the sacred records. Let us remember the Gospel was preached to the poor, therefore delivered in a language conformable to their ideas and conceptions: so we must look there only for the rule of Faith and practice, nor can we expect to gather anything from thence concerning matters of speculation; as the point before us certainly is, because if admitted, it could make no alteration in our measures of conduct. There is reason to believe that at all events, the evil consequences of a wicked life will be so great as to deserve all our pains and vigilance to escape them: and we could employ no more than all our pains and vigilance if they were absolutely eternal: the same methods of piety and good manners are necessary, whether they be endless, or only temporary, for a continuance to which nobody can set the certain bounds. And should they be in any shape serviceable to the spiritual host, so it may be presumed the happiness of compound creatures is likewise: but no man can tell whether it be better for that host, that he in particular should make himself happy or miserable, therefore his own good and the good of his own species is to be his sole guidance in the choice.

Thus the notion above suggested can have no influence upon practice, but may have a good influence upon our Faith, although itself not a necessary article of it: for that is more pure and saving when containing just sentiments of God, consistent and uniform throughout, liable to no doubts nor difficulties, nor wavering. But I have known very pious persons who found great difficulties in the thought of punishment absolutely eternal, as it seems to indicate an inveteracy, and insatiableness of vengeance utterly repugnant to their ideas of Goodness and Holiness, and as the incurring or escaping it depends much upon external causes: for though we cannot fail unless by our own wilful misconduct, and must work out our salvation by our own actions, yet it is undeniable that our Will and hearty desire to work it out was owing in great measure to the situation wherein we were born, our education, the company we have fallen into, events touching our hearts, and other favourable circumstances, none of which were of our own procurement, but derived to us by the courses of Providence; which seems to infer a predilection and reprobation, as utterly repugnant to their ideas of righteousness and equity.

The compensation suggested above, although made at an immense distance of time, will suffice to obviate this difficulty of reconciling the ways of Heaven with our ideas of the Attributes; for God, to whom a thousand years are as one day, in whose eye the magnitude of objects does not lessen by their remoteness, may counterpoise the nearest by the remotest in the scales of his equity: but no encouragement to sin can be drawn from hence, for things so immensely distant do not weigh upon our imagination. Men may possibly allege them in excuse for what they do upon other inducements, for it is not uncommon to mistake plausible arguments that may be urged in

justification of our conduct for the real motives of it; but whatever they may pretend, when they do wrong, it is always some pleasure of the day, some present passion or pressing desire that prevailed on them to do it.

If these reasons shall be allowed to obviate the objections occurring against the scheme proposed in the last section, I know of none other obstacle that should hinder its reception: and then the general interest will be extended to the whole host of created beings, carrying with it that of every individual contained therein. The spiritual natures will have an interest in the mixed, whose labours, transactions, and sufferings, contribute to the necessary support of their happiness, and whose enjoyments lessen the weight of a burden they lie liable some time or other to undergo themselves: the imprisoned have an interest in the state of their elder brethren set at large in the fields of happiness, which in due time will be opened to themselves; and the services they perform are but improvements of the reversion they shall one day inherit. Thus every perceptive creature becomes a citizen of the universe, entitled to his share in all the privileges and profits thereunto belonging; and whatever he does, or is made to do for the advantage of the whole, redounds to his own private benefit. Nevertheless, this does not take off the obligation of pursuing the happiness of our particular species, of any lesser community, of our neighbour, or of our own persons, by any means that do not bring greater detriment upon others; because, as remarked in a former place, by doing good to any one member of the universe, we add something to the stock of enjoyment among the whole: but it may serve for a consolation under any troubles we are forced to go through in a good cause, or see falling upon ourselves or others inevitably, or accidentally, to reflect, that we being subjected thereto by that Providence which orders all things for the best advantage of our great City, they are purchases of an estate to our own use infinitely more valuable than the price given in payment.

Thus the general interest of the universe has this advantage over all less general interests, that it turns to the account of every individual member, which is not always the case with any of the others. There are many unhappy wretches who it is believed will never obtain a place in the kingdom of the just, and so have no part in that great blessing of the human species; many private persons reap no benefit from advantages accruing to the nation or society whereto they belong. What are those brave heroes the better who have perished in the American expeditions, for our successes there? What am I the better who am taxed in my land, and my windows, and my beer and my wine, and my dry goods, and almost everything I use or possess? I never expect the return of a sixpence into my own pocket from all those acquisitions; therefore esteem it a piece of virtuous self-denial that I bear my burdens willingly and cheerfully, because believing them imposed for the necessary uses of my country; and look for my amends from the great general interest, which I apprehend advanced by every laudable measure.

This general interest then we may presume the grand aim whereto all the dispensations of Providence throughout every world have respect, and our gracious Governor acts most kindly herein for his creatures, because it is more valuable to every one of them without exception, than any inferior interest wherein they may have a share: whence follows that all the successes, adversities, transactions, and occurrences, among particular species, or communities, or single persons, contribute something in their several ways towards supporting the universal happiness, that it may never suffer

diminution. I say supporting, for though I have before spoken of advancing, there scarce seems a likelihood that it should admit of an increase, having been given in full measure on the first creation; as we may reasonably suppose, because there could be no higher interest to be served by a delay, or gradual growth of this from the stages of imperfection. But whatever was necessary for its sustentation must never have been wanting, from whence it seems an unavoidable consequence, that there ever have been and ever will be Earths and Hades interspersed among the universe, though the particular creatures have their appointed time to pass their journey through them, and then take up their abode for an infinitely longer continuance in their proper home, the Spiritual Nature.

Thus the perfection and happiness of the universe remains always invariably the same, but that of the human species, with every portion and member of it, perpetually fluctuates: for even when in a state of improvement, that improvement admits of frequent intermissions and retrogradations: it is like the tide flowing in waves upon a gently-rising shore, at the return of every wave the water runs backward, though the tide be coming forward all the while. We grow from infancy by gradual but not continual increase, for sickness or accident sometimes pulls us back, but when recovered therefrom find ourselves stronger the following year than we were the preceding. Few who have improved their fortunes but have met with disappointments in the way, when things seemed to turn against them as much as ever they had been favourable, yet those very untoward accidents sometimes prove the means of making matters better than they were before. We lay in stores of knowledge with greediness, and when seeming to have gotten them complete, find them unmanageable by their number, unfit for use, involved in doubts and perplexities; until by long digestion, order springs imperceptibly out of confusion, and we have just learned to live when it is almost time to die. Nor is it likely, as argued in a former place, that we should carry our acquisitions with us, because our old ideas must be troublesome, as giving a hankering after things we can have no more, and casting a terrifying strangeness upon the new scenes around us: yet the benefit of them may accrue by their fitting our organs for the exercise of powers and attainment of sciences we were not capable of here; like the motions of a child in the womb, which though of no use to it there, render the joints supple for the subsequent uses of life.

So likewise the growth of nations proceeds, in a manner similar to that of our faculties, by unequal and interrupted advances: invasion, rebellion, anarchy, and confusion, seem to destroy their very being for a while, but upon every emersion out of those disorders, they rise with fresh vigour, and a better settled constitution than ever they had aforetime.

To come lastly to the improvement of human nature, which we have compared to a tree, and like a tree it has its winters wherein the leaves and honours fall off, the juices stagnate, and it appears withered and lifeless. So Religion at times has been overwhelmed with ignorance, superstition, magic, juggling, and the grossest of human inventions: Philosophy has degenerated into sophistry, captiousness, arrogance, unavailing curiosity, and unintelligible jargon: both have been trampled under foot by ambition, licentiousness, war, desolation, and barbarism, insomuch that neither seemed to have any footsteps remaining upon earth. Nevertheless, Providence has ever preserved latent seeds of both to shoot up at intervals in new plants, more vigorous and healthy than those from whence they were produced: and as the vine extends her marriageable arms to clasp the sturdy elm for

her support, and enriches him with her dower of purple or amber clusters; so have they contributed mutually to sustain, to adorn, and to fructify one another.

37. We may presume the tree of perfection strikes stronger root and will arrive sooner at complete maturity for being some times cut down, than it would have done by a continual and equable growth. Certain it is that much good does spring from evil, our pains often prove the source of our pleasures: enhancing their sweetness by the contrast, creating new ones in the satisfaction of escaping them, exercising our activity and industry, which may supply us with many we should miss of; disappointment whets our sagacity, and adds treasures to our experience; even vice and folly have their share in contributing to the services and conveniencies of the world. How should we man our fleets or recruit our armies if there were no such thing as idleness, extravagance, and debauchery in the kingdom? I believe few even among the poorest ever breed up their children to those services, so that if none were taken into them who did not enter out of prudence or deliberate choice, I fear the little state of Genoa might be able to overrun us. The parents wish their lads to get a safe and honest livelihood upon land by their labour, or to learn some manual trade for a subsistence: but when a young fellow is good for nothing else, or becomes involved in debt, or hampered in some dangerous amour, then away he goes to make food for powder, or a sop in the briny broth of Ocean. And when commenced warrior, he becomes serviceable more by his imperfections than his good qualities: the watchings and fastings, the wants, distresses, bangs, and bruises he has brought upon himself by his irregularities, inure him to a hardiness that nothing can hurt; his averseness to forethought and the habit of singing Hang sorrow, cast away care, render him intrepid, because blind to danger, insensibility proving a succedaneum in the place of fortitude; that hardest of virtues to be acquired by contemplation and reasoning, and last learned by the Divine or Philosopher.

Nor is it unfrequent that the vices serve like rotten dung to force up those exotic plants the Virtues in us: violence unites the oppressed for their mutual defence, gives them a liking to one another, and teaches the rudiments of Charity; injury, together with the many contrivances employed for colouring it over, urge us to examine into the real essence of justice; craft and cozenage keep us perpetually upon our guard, put our faculties to the stretch, and lay the foundation of Prudence, that corner-stone of all the other virtues. The greatest part of our profitable experience we gather from the wickedness and follies falling within our notice; and he that had never met with a cheat, would stand open to be imposed upon by the first that should take him in hand. The simplicity of innocence seems so have been the source of all our misfortunes, for if Eve had been deceived before by the serpent into some imprudences not criminal, she might have been aware of his wiles, and escaped that fatal error which proved the condemnation of us all. Our own miscarriages discover to us the weakness of our nature, and direct us what cares to take for amending it, they mortify our pride, convince us of our dependence, and show that we are not masters of our own actions and thoughts, thereby manifesting the necessity of management and discipline to bring them into order. Temptations are necessary to invigorate our resolution by continually struggling with them, for he will never get an unshaken seat in the saddle, who never rides an unruly horse. More than half the employment in life, and half the use of reason, springs from our inordinate appetites, and the unreasonableness of oth

those totally removed, there would be no business for discretion, nor vigour of mind enabling us to pursue steadily the determinations of our judgment. Nothing so easy as to live among a society of equitable, obliging persons, without passion or desire of our own to disturb us; we should never know our wants or infirmities, nor make any advance towards perfecting our nature: but it is war and powerful resistance that make the hero, opposition and counterplotting that complete the politician. The violence, greediness, and selfishness of a wicked world require and teach us skill and fortitude to steer with a safe conscience among them; the unruliness of our own appetites and deceitfulness of sin oblige us to act with policy, and practise the art of making little advances for the interests of virtue under favourable circumstances.

Add further, that wickedness and passion set many excellent examples, by impelling to deeds that virtue might be glad to copy: for it is not beneath us to learn of anybody, provided we apply our learning to better uses than those who taught us. The moralists exhort us to this method. Juvenal addresses his pupils the same way: Villains, says he, can leave their beds before day, to cut people's throats, why then cannot you take an hour from your pillow for your health and spirits' sake? The divine moralist recommends our imitation of the unjust steward, in his provident care for the future, that he might be received into a commodious habitation when turned out of his present. It would do us no hurt to take pattern from the Devil, who goeth about, like a roaring lion, seeking incessantly whom he may devour, and setting all his wits at work to draw the prey into his snares, if we could learn thereby to be as indefatigable in doing good as he is in wreaking his malice; and those disciples of his who have spent years of toil and trouble in contrivances to glut their revenge, may teach us perseverance in the prosecution of a good design through the greatest discouragement and difficulties that may stand in our way. The command of passion and easiness under abuse practised by the ambitious, the compliance with all humours by the flatterer, the hardiness of the night-robber, the application of the pick-pocket, the wire-dancer, and the balance-master, to become expert in their several arts, the fearlessness of death, the contempt of pain and distress in the common soldier or sailor, may serve as lessons and incitements from whence we may draw something to our advantage: for though these things can scarcely be called Virtues in the persons who possess them, yet are they ingredients which may well enter into the composition of virtue.

38. We may observe that God, in the courses of his providence, employs evils to bring forth excellent purposes: he raises kingdoms from bands of robbers, outlaws, and pirates, by rapine, violence, rebellion, misrule, and narrow selfishness of all kinds. How much are we obliged to the Norman invasion, unruliness of the Barons, usurpations of the Pope, dissoluteness of the Monks, despotic passion of the last Harry, hypocritical zeal for religion and liberty in the next age, and headlong superstition of popish monarch for our present happy constitution? and I may add, for the robustness and vigour of it, to the encroaching temper of a neighbouring nation. He maintains the polity of nations by ambition, thirst of title, and of power; for who would submit to be thwarted in the cabinet, baited in parliament, and lampooned in public, without some fond passion for rule to tickle his fancy? he preserves their liberty by licentiousness, impatience of control, and envy; for who would ever mind what the ministers do, if it were not for the secret pleasure there is in the thought of mortifying the great? He

leads to a principle of honour, that noblest sentiment in the human breast, by the desire of excelling, insomuch that some have made emulation a virtue: he sharpens our faculties by the whetstone of perverseness and litigiousness, which drive us to clear conception by the pains taken to misunderstand us, teaches sobriety and discretion by seeing reason turned to wanton speculations or mischievous purposes, and made an advocate for the passions; he exercises our patience by the diseases, pains, and troubles, consequent upon our intemperance and follies, awakens our vigilance by the self-partiality of all whom we have to deal with, spurs us to activity by the pressing importunity of our desires, and weans us from this world by our eagerness in hunting after pleasures until they cloy with continual repetition.

Nor does he find the wickedness of men improper wheels for carrying on his most important designs among them: the turbulence of the Gracchi, ambition of the Cæsars, the exorbitancy of the Romans swallowing up their neighbouring nations one after another, the discords and factions among those nations rendering them an easy prey, all contributed to establish that peace and continued intercourse throughout a great part of the then known world, which was necessary for forwarding the promulgation of the Gospel. The treachery of Judas, and the inveteracy of the Jews crying Crucify him, crucify him, were made the principal instruments in working out our Redemption: trials and persecutions were sent to perfect the first disciples: superstition and priestcraft have occasioned the calling in reason to discover their artifices, and purify Religion from their corruptions: enthusiasm on the one hand, and free-thinking on the other, still continue to keep us in the golden mean, and rub off the foulness of all kinds that is apt to gather about us. Temperance, patience, humility, fortitude, and most of our other virtues, consist in resisting our appetites, and walking uprightly amidst the violent, the deceitful, the voluptuous, and the selfish: so that reason and inordinate desire seem to be the two antagonist muscles which give motion to the business of life; if either of them lose its tone, the other becomes enfeebled or convulsed, and a paralytic disorder ensues.

Nor does there want room to imagine that good may spring out of evil in other soils than those of this sublunary globe; we read that the wicked were created for the day of the Lord, and this may be understood not only as their punishment serves for a warning to keep the just in their duty, by strengthening their aversion to the causes of the miseries exhibited, but as the righteous may find something in the characters of the wicked capable of being turned to their own advantage: for we have seen above, that vice does sometimes produce outward actions in this world, which if proceeding from virtue, would be the highest exercises of it: why then should we judge it impossible, that the like may happen in the next? That unmoveable determination upon a particular purpose, that impetuosity of resolution and insensibility to impending mischiefs observed in the reprobate, may instruct the righteous how to imitate them upon better occasions. And if, as supposed in the Vision, they have the entire command of their passions to stir them up for particular services as wanted, they may find examples of more vigorous passion in vicious characters, and take stronger impressions by means of their sentient language, than perhaps reason could ever work up. Then for the purely spiritual host, although we cannot certainly tell how the evils among inferior creatures

operate to their benefit, yet that they do so operate, I have already given reasons to evince.

Since then we find evil, as well moral as physical, productive of many salutary fruits, why should we deem it unworthy a place in the plan of Providence, or the permission of it repugnant to our ideas of Goodness and Holiness? for it is the ultimate end had in prospect, not the means necessary to attain it, that denominate the quality of an action. Therefore it ought not to be made a rock of offence, nor thought an impeachment of the divine Goodness, that evil is permitted: our opinion of that Attribute need only persuade us that God never terminates his view upon evil, not even of the particular creature whereon it falls. He suffers frailties in the good for their trial, their warning, their instruction, their correction, and amendment: he suffers vicious characters for the advantage of the community; he suffers wickedness, dissolution and destruction in communities, for promoting his gracious designs in the advancement of human nature: he suffers imperfection, reprobation, and misery in the species, for some unknown benefit redounding therefrom to the spiritual host, in which host every perceptive individual in the creation has its principal interest. And nothing hinders but we may believe that our gracious Governor has reduced the quantity of evil in the whole universe to as small a compass as was possible in the nature and constitution of things.

39. That Nature and things were originully so constituted as to make any quantity necessary, is matter of Creation, which we have no faculties nor light from experience to understand: for the first Creation must have been a pure act, but we never saw a Creation, nor have any conception of a pure act proceeding without motives occurring from observation of preexistent objects; and it has been shown elsewhere, that there must have been other Attributes, whereof we have no imagination, concerned in the business of Creation. But like Moses we are admitted only to see the back parts of God, or rather the image of them reflected in his works, for no man can see his face and live, or while he lives: it is no wonder then we do not discern the full beauty and symmetry of the Attributes, some whereof are to us unseen and utterly unknown. And yet if there appear any imperfection in the reflected image, it is owing to the deficiency of our optics: for could we behold distant good in as striking colours as present pleasure, and had we a just sense of the vast disproportion evil bears to good throughout the Universe, and in the portion of every individual member, we should despise it for its smallness, nor think it any abatement in our idea of goodness. We have seen in former chapters, there is no reason to estimate it higher than in proportion to the length of our journey through matter, compared with that of the abode in spiritual substance; or the number of creatures in a state of imperfection, to those partaking of the purely spiritual nature, that is, one to many millions of millions. But let us take it only at one million, and compute how many years a million of minutes will amount to, which we shall find above two and twenty: if then a man were to live to the age of Methuselah in perfect happiness and full enjoyment of everything he could desire, excepting only that he were to be in pain for one minute in every two and twenty years, he would find no cause to complain or murmur at the hardness of his lot. But our minutes of trouble sometimes come so thick together that they make a link further than we can discern objects with an affecting clearness: so that the millions of joyful minutes beyond the line have no weight in our estimation, not for want

of real substance, but because our concern being engaged by things in proportion to their nearness, we can raise none for those lying very remote; and thus our scruples arise from the imperfection of our judgment, setting a value solely upon things near at hand, and unable to discern a goodness the effects whereof we do not immediately feel.

Yet there are many persons whom a little sober consideration can satisfy, that it is no impeachment of Goodness to bring on a few physical evils, which work out a much greater good: but the grand stumbling-block lies in moral evil, for which they cannot conceive that provision should be made by a righteous and holy Being. But Righteousness and Holiness cannot vary from Goodness, therefore whatever is ultimately productive of good, must be right and holy: for the very essence of moral evil depends upon natural; sin were no sin, nor would God or reason forbid it, if the works of it never brought hurt or damage upon any creature whatever. Therefore physical evil being once accounted for, there is no difficulty in accounting for the moral; for if the mischiefs it produces be necessary in the universe, they must fall somewhere, and as I have already argued in the Chapter upon Holiness, it is more gracious and merciful that they should be incurred by wilful transgression, than commanded as a duty, or imposed as an inevitable burden upon the righteous. Nor need we fear that, vent being given to wickedness, it should overflow beyond bounds to make havoc in the creation: for God, who has all hearts in his hand, and can raise up children unto Abraham of the stones, can mark out the exact limits to iniquity, that it surpass not what is just necessary for his gracious purposes, and rescue the most obdurate from the dominion of it whenever that necessity comes.

CHAP. XX.

IMITATION OF GOD.

We are exhorted in the Gospel to be as holy as God is holy, perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect, and reason directs, that although we must never expect to hit the mark of perfection, yet we ought always to take our aim directly towards it, and endeavour to shape our proceedings by the completest model. Now what completer model can we have, than the Fountain of wisdom and blessings, who is gracious in all his dealings, good and righteous in all his ways, with whom is no envy nor malice, nor passion, nor error, nor selfishness, nor variableness, nor shadow of change. Nevertheless, as there is no rule so salutary that may not be perverted to mischievous purposes, men may take occasion to justify wicked practices under a notion of imitating the divine example: and I should be very sorry to have given a handle for such plea by having in several parts of this work ascribed all events to the provisions of Heaven, made in certain knowledge and purpose of their being produced thereby; and particularly in the last Chapter represented both moral and physical evil as comprised within the plan of Providence, and employed to work out its gracious designs: which some perhaps may interpret, making God the Author of sin, the encourager and approver of all that is committed.

Now I do not fear to be suspected of such an intention by any candid disputant, for it is always esteemed unfair to charge an antagonist with consequences following from his doctrines, which he does not see and does not avow. But this consequence I utterly disclaim; yet shall not rest contented with such defence, being not so solicitous to save my own credit, as to prevent

mischief ensuing to anybody from the things I advance: therefore although I have already handled this point in the Chapter on Holiness, shall give it a re-examination here, esteeming repetition and superfluity more pardonable than deficiency upon a matter of this importance, because one may have the luck to cast a light upon things in a second attempt, rendering them apparent to persons with whom one had failed in the first.

I shall observe then, that we do not always imitate another by doing the same actions that he does, where the stations and powers are different, but by conducting ourselves within our province with the same temper, dispositions, and views. The private man, who should take state upon him because done by the king, or punish a criminal because having seen the like procedure in a magistrate, could never justify himself upon their example, because they would not have done the like in his circumstances; for the same deed may proceed from opposite principles in different agents. But we must remember, that God is in heaven, and we upon earth, that his knowledge is infinite, his command over all things, and there is nothing external to interfere with his work, or obstruct his operations in the universe: therefore he discerns the exact consequences of evil, and is able to restrain it within certain bounds, that it produce none but such as are salutary; neither is there hazard of any accident to hinder the success of his measures. To us he has given a portion of understanding and power, and a narrow sphere to act in, wherein it is our business to conduct ourselves by the same spirit as observable in his providence, that of ordering all things for the best, according to our little skill to discern it. But our prospects being short, we can never see the remotest consequences of our actions, therefore must take moral good for our guide, directing us to such as are profitable: if it sometimes seems leading into inconveniences, yet we know not what unthought-of mischiefs may ensue upon other occasions by weakening its authority with ourselves or others: for if we lose sight of our polar star, we shall quickly wander into inextricable difficulties, nor can justify ourselves upon the example of him, whose Wisdom sets him above the need of any guidance.

2. But our faculties being scanty, we cannot carry in our imagination everything that our reason convinces us must be truth, without great damage to ourselves; for which reason, although we must confess that all events proceed with the knowledge and acquiescence of Providence, nevertheless, there is a necessary distinction to be made between things providential, and others that are not, as I have endeavoured to explain in the Chapter bearing that title: nor ought we ever to ascribe things trivial or wicked to God, for fear of giving us a fondness for the one, or lessening our abhorrence of the other. For there is a different set of ideas, a different turn of conception and language for contemplation, and for common use: therefore it is remarkable, that in exhortatory discourses upon this subject, we are cautioned against believing God the Author of sin, the phrase employed is not his being the cause, for this manner of expression is not usually current in common speech; on the other hand, in our speculations, to whatever original causes we may ascribe the existence of moral evil, we never speak of him as being the author of it, for cause and author are two very different things. He who takes out an execution for a sum which the debtor's effects are but just sufficient to raise, may be the cause of his being reduced to poverty and distress, but cannot with propriety be charged as the author of his troubles; a justice of peace reading the proclamation to a mob of rioters, who he knows will not disperse, is the cause of the felony and the punishment consequent thereupon, yet cannot be called the author of them.

nor imputable therewith: for being the author implies giving a sanction or authority to a thing, doing it with delight, or setting it as a precedent to be followed. Therefore if any man should happen to believe God the cause of sin, it will do him no hurt, provided he do not imagine him the immediate cause impelling or drawing thereinto supernaturally, nor that the commission of it will stand approved or excused in his sight, or be the less obnoxious to punishment upon that account.

But the perplexities involving this subject spring from mingling conceptions belonging to the two languages together by a kind of half-reasoning, that suffices to raise difficulties but not pursue them to an issue: for there are those who will argue, that if causes were provided for the production of evil, the commission of it must be approved of; for it is absurd to suppose that God would admit an event into his plan, which he should not approve of when happening. But why so? The magistrate above mentioned might not approve of the felony he gave occasion to by an act performed for the preservation of peace and discouragement of riots? and a man may take physic without approving of the commotions it will raise in him, if he thinks it expedient for his health's sake: so God may permit wickedness he does not approve of, for the sake of the consequences to result from it. Well, but, say they, this will make the matter worse, for those consequences are the grievous punishment of the transgressor: so you represent the supreme Being as craftily malicious, giving course to iniquity that he may have just cause to take vengeance on the perpetrators. So indeed I own it must be regarded if we stop at the punishment; but the mistakes all along proceed from our sticking half way without carrying our thoughts to the end, which the suffering ought not to be esteemed, for there are the services resulting to the universe beyond whereto the eye of Providence extends: therefore God no more delights in the punishment than he approves the sin, but permits both for the necessary uses they are of to his Creation.

Thus if evil be permitted by him, or even were the causes of it appointed by his Providence, we could not then pronounce it approved or pleasing in his sight: for it is a too subtle refinement upon words, drawing them out of their genuine sense, to understand by disapproved, an event that happens against his Will, for nothing can ever so happen; or by displeasing, something that gives him uneasiness or vexation, for these he is not capable of receiving. But in the obvious natural sense of approbation and pleasure wherein alone we have any concern to regard them, they belong to actions whereto God has annexed a blessing or reward: and if we take them in this proper signification as commonly understood, it will not follow that evil is approved or pleasing, because permitted for the sake of some necessary uses, accruing from the punishment incurred thereby. The approbation of God rests wholly and solely upon our good actions, and our endeavours to promote them, as well in ourselves as others, are alone pleasing in his sight; even in cases where it is his Will, for wise purposes to us unknown, that those endeavours should not succeed. If the master of a vessel having a hundred hands on board, being overtaken in a storm, employ all his care and diligence to weather it, and be excited to exert himself more strenuously in compassion to his crew and justice to his owners, nevertheless the ship with all its freight is overwhelmed in the sea: we must conclude from the event, that it was the Will of Heaven they should perish, yet both God and man will applaud the master though he did his utmost to oppose that Will, because he did it not in the spirit of opposition, but in compliance with the rules of rectitude which we are always to look upon as the Will of God.

In like manner we may gather, from experience of ourselves and all around us, it has pleased God to permit, that folly and wickedness of all kinds should abound in the world, and that we ourselves should be foiled by temptations: yet we shall become most acceptable to him by setting ourselves with all our might to oppose the growth of wickedness, and struggle against every temptation assailing us. For though it should be his Will that offences shall come, it is not his Will that we should co-operate thereto: therefore wo is to him by whom they come. I have observed in the last section of the preceding Chapter, that inordinate desire and reason seem to be the two antagonist muscles giving motion to all the business of life, so that the business is carried on by the contrary action of those muscles: if there were no temptation, virtue would have little work to do; if there were no virtue, temptation would fail of its destined effect; but the work is completed by the resistance of one against the other. God has been pleased to assign us the exercise of reason for our task; this then is to be our attention and our care: whatever we perceive tending to draw us aside from that exercise, we are to resist to the uttermost: if he has any secret purpose to overpower our reason, there is no fear that by resisting we should defeat it, for the purposes of God will always take effect, and a better effect for us upon our resistance, when made out of a regard to our duty. Therefore let us keep steadily to the province allotted us, esteeming it presumption and sacrilege to encroach upon the divine prerogative: for the permission of evil is the prerogative of God reserved solely to his own management, he alone knows the proper measure of it, and when it will produce more salutary than pernicious fruits among his creatures.

3. The benefits of evil, for which we may presume it was permitted, accrue either to particular persons, or to communities, or the Species, or the Universe: to particular persons it serves for their trial, their correction, their humiliation, and awakening their vigilance; but there can be no trial of strength without exerting it in opposition to the adversary, no correction without endeavours to mend the frailty when discovered; a voluntary defeat will not prove a humiliation, because we may think we could have conquered had we tried for it; and our vigilance is not awakened unless we stand upon our guard against future surprises; therefore so far as we willingly give way to temptation, we prevent the good effects it might have had upon us. Nor can we know the exact measure proper for our uses, or if we could, it were needless to do anything for compleating it; for we may rest assured that the proper measure is already provided in our frailty, and the external allurements around us: so we have no occasion to increase it; but as we are taught to pray, Lead us not into temptation, it is incumbent upon us to use our endeavours towards preventing what we pray against, or else our prayers will be but hypocrisy and mockery, being themselves the very evil we pray to escape.

Neither can we know the conduciveness of evil to any more or less general interest, therefore we can have no warrant to give it scope: we see nothing but disorder and mischief come from it, the intricate channel by which good flows from that disorder and mischief are discernible to God alone; therefore the permission of it may be gracious and holy in him, yet the practice of it would be malignant and wicked in us. There is room to apprehend the advantage accrues ultimately to the spiritual host, and it was for their sakes that evil has a place in nature; but we can form no rule from thence for shaping our measures, for want of light to discern in what manner the advantage accrues: for though it be probable they have an in-

terest in all transactions and occurrences passing here below, yet we can never know what particular conduct is most expedient for them to be pursued. Perhaps it may be matter of consequence to the Mundane Soul, whether I shall put on my light or my dark-coloured suit to-morrow, but if I study till morning, I shall never find out which of the two it is best for him that I should wear; therefore I shall make my choice upon the same ground that other people go upon, by the rules of civility and decency, or if they have no directions to give in the case, then by my own humour and fancy: for we may trust the disposition of Providence, that in every action, important or trivial, if rightly performed according to the occasion, all the good possible shall redound therefrom to every creature whom it can any ways affect.

But if upon these indifferent matters we can gather no clue of direction from the general interest of the creation, much less in those of the highest concern to ourselves: what though we may justly conclude from the floods of wickedness permitted in the world, that they are of some necessary uses, it is impossible for us to know whether it be better for the Universe, that we in particular should lead a wicked life: thus much we may know, that if better, it is so by means of the heavy punishment it will bring upon us, serving for an example or other unknown benefit to the beholders: which punishment is an apparent evil, deserving our utmost efforts and vigilance to escape; nor are we to concern ourselves with anything beyond it, but are taught to look upon it as an eternity boundless in our eye. So far as the lights of our understanding extend, there is reason to believe that we serve the Universe best by doing the most good we can to ourselves and other members of it, because we add thereby to the stock of enjoyment in Nature: we have nothing to do with additions to be made any other way; to attempt prying into them would be meddling with matters far above our reach.

4. Nor have we so much to do for the general interests of the Species as we frequently imagine; the progress of perfection is carried on by the secret and intricate windings of Providence, to us utterly unknown, and many times appearing destructive of their purpose, therefore no objects of our imitation: the only obvious means are by embracing all opportunities that occur of advancing true Religion and reason, discretion and good manners, in such ways as our own considerate judgment, or that of other persons of approved characters may recommend. We take too much upon ourselves when pretending to reform mankind by other methods, by pulling down idols, demolishing meeting-houses, persecuting, damning, and censuring heretics, or by ridiculing things sacred, combatting received opinions, and the like, without a calm examination of what effects our procedure herein is likely to produce; for this is acting by indiscreet zeal and impulse of passion, wherein we do not copy the most perfect pattern, who proceeds upon Intelligence and Wisdom, as well in his judgments as in his blessings, as well when he restrains, as when he permits of heresy and superstition.

And though the temporal interests of mankind claim the preference before those of any part, yet do we seldom stand in a situation to look further than the prosperity of our own country whereto we belong: wherefore in lawful wars the subjects on opposite sides may do their duty, and act agreeably to the Will of God, in opposing, weakening, or destroying one another, and taking every method that offers of doing service to their respective

community. Even the public good of the community is too large to be the object of our constant attention; and in fact, in these climates of liberty and self-sufficiency, does occupy more of it than avails to any good purpose. How fond are our plebeians to sit in judgment upon laws and public measures, to pass sentence upon the ministers, and to mend the nation, when they had better been minding their shops and their trades? It is certainly for the preservation of liberty, that every one should be ready to cry out when he is hurt, and to join in with the complaints of those who have cause for them; but to cry before he is hurt, or has any well-grounded apprehension of danger, upon a flying report, a surmise, private interest, resentment, wantonness, or dislike, tends to discredit the voice of the people, and lessen their weight, that surest counterpoise against power, and strongest bulwark both of liberty and national strength.

Nor are we less officious in meddling with one another's affairs than those of our superiors, we must needs play the censor upon our neighbours' character and actions, lay out his expenses, regulate his dress, settle his table, and dispose of his children: and all this not with a probable view of doing any good to him or ourselves thereby, but only to gratify our vanity by the contrast of his follies and imperfections. As we are members of the species and of the community, and have our principal stake among them, it is our duty, our praise, and our truest interest to consult their benefit preferably to our private advantage, whenever the two happen to come visibly into competition; and as we live in society, we are to do our parts towards rendering it as beneficial as lies in our power, to every member of it within our reach. Therefore whenever the interest of religion or practical Philosophy may be forwarded by our aid, when an improvement in any science, or art, or manufacture, or convenience for benefit of mankind can be made, any service done to the public, any real good procured for our neighbour, whether by instruction, exhortation, censure, ridicule, example, or otherwise, it is a noble self-denial to stop short in the pursuit of our own desires, that we may apply our industry to the greater advantage of others.

But opportunities of this sort rarely happen to most of us: we are not of such importance as that much of what passes around should depend upon our management; therefore our principal attention is due to the conducting ourselves well in our own affairs and several professions, for thereby we shall contribute the most effectually we can, towards promoting all other more general interests. And in so doing we shall be of more importance than we can perceive, for we are stationed and portioned by Providence, in whose works every little engine employed is necessary for completing the great design, when acting in the sphere assigned it. This then is our province, or I may call it the little world which God has put under our government: it is our business to know the extent of our province, that we may not encroach upon territories beyond our commission, and to lay our narrow plan of Providence for the administration of it similar, so far as human infirmity will permit, though immensely unequal, to his universal one; ordering everything therein for the best, according to the measure of understanding and power vouchsafed us. But our discernment being short and our powers feeble, it will behove us to avail ourselves of those methods that have been prescribed for enlarging the one; and invigorating the other: those then I purpose next to take under consideration, examining into their several uses and manner of operation, in hopes to rescue them from the contempt they have lain under with some persons, and to settle

their value upon the right bottom which has been misplaced by others, whereby we may the better learn how to supply them in due measure and upon proper occasions.

CHAP. XXI.

CHRISTIAN SCHEME.

By the methods prescribed for enlarging our discernment and invigorating our powers, spoken of at the conclusion of the last Chapter, it will easily be understood that I had in view the Christian institutions: the examination whereof is best pursued by a calm and careful exercise of our judgment upon their several uses and operations. But the surest basis and necessary guidance for forming a judgment upon the parts of a system, can only be found in the general scope and main design of the whole, and the spirit wherein it was delivered: which will enable us to attain a clear conception of the words and phrases as we go along. The gifted preacher, when talking most sweetly and with power, so as to raise ecstatic transports in his audience, runs on a string of animating words, with no determinate meaning. Whether or no this be the proper method for confirming and strengthening the godly, it is certainly not the right way to succeed upon the rationalist, whom I am to deal with: for he will expect to be addressed in an intelligible language, rather calculated to inform the understanding, than to warm the heart, or touch the springs of affection. Now the common language of mankind being various and fluctuating, the same terms and the same expressions carrying a very different sense according to the occasion whereon they are employed, nothing but an attention to the purpose wherewith, and spirit wherein they were delivered, can ascertain their proper force. Neither poetry, nor rhetoric, nor argumentation, nor, perhaps, any other performances, except in mathematics, can be fully understood, without entering into the spirit of the performer. And the Scriptures being given in the language of the Jewish populace, and abounding in figurative, mysterious expressions, many times seeming at first sight contradictory, it is nowhere more eminently true than here, That the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive.

But as you must pour water into a pump, before you can draw a supply of water from thence; and give fire to a cannon in order to excite the fire of the powder: so without a proper spirit of inquiry, you can never reach that of the object you contemplate. For a dull, or careless, or wrong-directed application will find nothing but lumpish lead, or, at most, delusive blaze in whatever it falls upon. Hence it appears, there are two spirits to be considered, that of the learner, and that of the teacher; the former preparative for reception of the other. Therefore St. John bids us try the spirits; because they being the leading principles, whoever gives heed to those of a wrong turn will be misled, which is worse than no guidance at all.

2. The spirit of opposition and cavil is least likely of any to carry a man beyond the letter, to which it pertinaciously adheres for that very reason, because it is killing: or if it ever attempt to strike out a latent meaning, it finds one that is the most exceptionable, because affording the most ample matter for censure and ridicule.

The spirit of prejudice and prepossession, though not quite so pernicious as the former, serves as little to profit by: for it will admit of no improvement upon what it had brought from its own fund, but rather, like a mortification, turns the soundest parts into its own likeness. When a man has strongly imbibed the tenets of a sect, or espoused some particular notions of his own, he proceeds thenceforward with a spirit of zeal rather than improvement: he searches the Scriptures, not to learn by them, but to hunt for detached texts in support of his opinions. He forms a composition wherein several Scripture terms are repeatedly introduced without any accurate meaning, or apt connection in the places they are made to occupy, and then by help of a Concordance finds out all the passages wherein those terms occur, to be produced as divine authorities for his coarse-wrought texture.

There is likewise a spirit of vanity, which often mingles among the two foregoing, and sometimes operates alone. The scoffer and caviller move as much by impulse of vanity as crossness: the credit of shrewdness, and smartness of overthrowing great authorities, and debasing revered characters, works powerfully upon some tempers; and good-nature may more willingly admit this for the general root of opposition, because being a less blameable principle than mere rancour and resentment. In the zealot his prepossession seems to be the first spring of motion, but quickly leads him into an opinion of excelling, of conceiting himself the sole sure interpreter of the Sacred Writings, pitying the bulk of mankind, as deluded, carnal-minded creatures, and even ascribing the preservation and property of the nation more to himself, and his associates in the same way of thinking, than to our counsellors and senators, our generals and admirals: for what avails the wisdom of the wise, the valour of the brave, or strength of the mighty, without the blessing of Heaven? which blessing is drawn down by the pious breathings of a few true believers persevering in their uprightness amidst a sinful and corrupt generation; so that our Sodom is saved for the sake of ten righteous persons happily found therein. Yet vanity will maintain her ground without either captiousness or prior engagement to support her. An ingenious exposition or plausible construction that nobody has hit upon before, will often beguile the most impartial inquirer to wander out of the way, and stop his ears against all remonstrances urged to bring him back again: for there is a shame in retracing an opinion one has once strongly given course to, and this will work unperceived even by the party under its influence. I have already remarked in my Chapter upon that article, that vanity will find means upon some particular occasions to insinuate itself into persons who are in general of an humble and rather diffident disposition; that none can be too vigilant against his attacks, because none can be secure against having them made upon him in the most covert manner.

Another spirit is that of novelty, which entices by the mere pleasure of making discoveries, without any reflection on their being the produce of an extraordinary penetration, or any comparison with the oversights of others. The knowledge of any truth apprehended useful is sweet to the mind, and our eagerness to taste this sweetness makes us entertain a persuasion of our knowing a thing before we really do know it. Therefore it is dangerous to pass a judgment upon a new discovery while it is a new one, and until time shall have abated the sweetness of novelty, and given scope for reflection to flow in from different quarters.

3. Besides these, there is a spirit of terror and anxiety, and a spirit of

enthusiasm, which though of opposite qualities, the one being phlegmatic and diffident, the other fiery and presumptuous, nevertheless often unite in the same person. The first of these represents every persuasion of a divine truth as sacred, and every error or ignorance as the sin of infidelity. Whomsoever this spirit possesses, he is obliged under pain of damnation to find evidences in the sacred records of what he has esteemed a sacred truth; and that instantly, without hesitation; nor may he suffer his thoughts to suggest for a moment a construction of any text, however obvious and natural, that seems to raise a doubt against it: for to disbelieve or even doubt the word of God would be the most atrocious offence against his Glory. So he proceeds under a perpetual dread and trepidation lest he should mistake or harbour any mistrust: not being able to distinguish that it is one thing to doubt whether the word of God be true, and quite another to doubt whether some particular article be the true sense of that word. But without the latter doubt, there is no room for deliberation: for when you are clear on one side of the question, what have you to deliberate upon? Every searching the Scriptures implies a mistrust that our knowledge may not yet be complete, and a decent confidence that we may get information by an honest exercise of our judgment upon them. But a fearful awe and hurrying solicitude must needs cramp the mind, not giving free scope for the balance of judgment to play, nor the weights to enter the scale; so that it can never make a fresh decision, either for improvement of knowledge or rectifying of mistakes. The case is the same in the most common matters: if a man going to examine a tailor's bill, should have a pistol holden over him, and be threatened with being shot through the head, if he did not cast it up exactly right in three minutes, he would be able to make no use of his arithmetic in such a situation. Therefore the timid inquirer may indeed be secure against losing such knowledge as he happens to have; but if he lie under any misapprehensions, (as what mortal man is exempt from them?) it is impossible he should ever be cured.

The spirit of enthusiasm is no less averse to doubt and deliberation, which appear superfluous: for it proceeds wholly by impulse and intuition. It possesses with the notion of a supernatural power and illumination accompanying the sanctified, which displays to him objects in their true shapes and colours, that never could have been discovered by the exercise of the natural faculties. So he has no use for his understanding, but only for his eyes, to carry him along the several spots whereon the light within him from time to time shall strike. This spirit naturally introduces that of prejudice and prepossession; and its misguidings are harder to be rectified than those of any before mentioned. For being known only by the strength of glare it casts, whatever strikes strongly upon the fancy, or is rivetted therein by continual harangues chimed always in the same strain, is taken for a supernatural light: and if anybody offers to examine or reason upon it, he is rejected without hearing; for all human reasoning gives marks of a carnal man, who cannot know the things of God, because they are spiritually discerned.

None of these spirits appear at all likely to reach the vivifying principle wanted: for either they stick at the dead letter, or extract something from it equally deadly with the letter itself. But the most serious and sincere being liable to fall, more or less, under the influence of any of them, except the first, it seemed expedient to take notice of the various dangers surrounding on all quarters, that we may know what to guard against.

4. For if we can keep clear of their misguidings, we shall more readily

imbibe the proper spirit of a learner, which is that of meekness and sobriety, of calm consideration, attentive industry, and the docility of children; for of such we are told is the kingdom of heaven. I do not apprehend it understood that we are to come with the ignorance, but with the simplicity and inquisitiveness of children: for he that cometh to God must first believe that he is, and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him; so that some previous knowledge is necessary for the learner to bring with him. But he must put on a disposition to receive whatever shall be taught him, in the genuine sense intended to be conveyed; he may laudably use his old knowledge for the quicker apprehension of what is taught, but must so far lay all his old opinions dormant, as that they may not obstruct its reception.

Here I must expect the free-thinker will declaim loudly against me as a reviver of popish tyranny over the thoughts, an abettor of implicit faith; who would suffer nobody to use his eyes or judge for himself, but would have him submit his understanding to the authority of his leaders, and swallow anything poured into his mouth with the credulity and eagerness of children. This clamour I shall endeavour to quiet by observing that it takes rise from the very mistake I have been complaining of, namely, that of sticking at the surface of the letter without penetrating into the spirit of what I recommend. It is apparent throughout this volume, that I have proceeded in the spirit of a neutral, not undertaking to demonstrate the truth of Christianity: for this I leave to Divines, who are better versed in the external evidence and history; but striving to examine what it is, to compare it with the dictates of human reason, in order to discover what conformity may be found, and what reconcilement effected between them. I would have every man judge for himself, but not pass his judgment until after full cognizance of the cause: while taking this cognizance, he cannot do better than assume the openness and indifference of a child: when he has examined the internal evidence, and become master of the case, then let him resume the man together with his former opinions, contrasting them therewith, provided he has taken care to build them upon solid, rational foundations; and he shall know of the doctrine whether it be from God.

And I must observe to the free-thinker that he has already practised more of the child than I desire of him: for he took his idea of Religion from what he learnt of his nurse while literally a child, and now passes his judgment upon her anile representation. Whereas he may please to remember I recommended the docility, not the ignorance of children: therefore wish him to study the cause afresh, now that he has acquired knowledge of other kinds and improved his faculties by practice; laying aside the old woman, and having recourse to the written word, with the aid of Mr. Locke, and other learned expositors. If I advise a suspension of all old opinions which might obstruct his progress, it is agreeable to the golden rule of doing as one would be done by, being no more than what I practise myself in the perusal of any system whereof I have previously heard either a good or bad account. When taking Lucretius in hand, I enter into his ideas of rough and smooth, hooked, sharp, square, and multangular atoms, their uncertain declinations, and essential gravity, though contrary to my own persuasions; for else I could not expect to understand his plan, nor judge of its construction. The same thing I apprehend done by our judges upon a trial: if they have taken any impressions from reports without doors, they cast them aside, and during the hearing attend solely to the depositions of witnesses, and arguments of counsel on both sides; forming their judgment afterwards upon the lights gathered from thence.

Having thus vented my thoughts upon the spirit of the learner, they lead naturally to consider that of the teacher, the main scope and end aimed at by the doctrine, together with the means and manner employed in pursuing it: whereon I shall offer my general idea without accumulating texts in support of every particular contained therein, which indeed I cannot readily recollect, and might be tedious and perplexing to the reader; who without my suggesting will be able to apply such as may be needful, from his own remembrance, and likewise to judge whether this idea in any part of it be contradictory to reason, and his experience of human nature.

5. The very terms, Salvation and Redemption, constantly employed to express the end proposed in the Christian dispensation, direct us to regard it as a deliverance from some evil that mankind laboured under: which evil is represented to have been brought upon the human race by the lapse of Adam, and is called Death. For man was created perfect, having access to the tree of life which would have made him immortal; until upon the first act of disobedience his nature was debased, himself banished from the tree of life, and laid under the curse; Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return. Which curse was taken off by the sacrifice of Christ, who was made a curse for him: and thus as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.

I see no ground to apprehend that death was a direct and physical effect of the forbidden fruit, which contained such poisonous qualities as to render the bodies of Adam and all his descendants perishable and mortal, or that a miraculous alteration was instantly worked in them by the divine power: but that there was one step intervening between the act of transgressing and death. For that introduced sin, and death entered by sin, being the wages and natural consequence thereof.

It occurs next to inquire what is to be understood by Death: the common literal acceptation, denoting a separation of soul from body on ceasing of the vital functions, cannot be admitted, as being incompatible both with reason and Scripture. For the denunciation, In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die, was not literally fulfilled; because Adam did not die in the day that he ate. Neither is it conceivable, that death should be the wages of sin, or that if Man had never fallen he would have lived forever: for this supposition will not stand with the contemplation of the frame and nature of the human body, nor constitution of the earth, which is not contrived commodiously to lodge and maintain all those multitudes which have been, and are likely to be born into it; besides being in its own nature perishable, so as to become some time or other incapable of affording any habitation at all.

Death upon the present occasion must be considered as an evil; for if it were not, as the denunciation of it would be no threat, so the deliverance from it would be no Redemption. But the bare separation of soul and body, or decay and corruption of the latter, is not acknowledged an evil either in Philosophy or Religion: let us then reflect what it is that makes it so. And this we shall find to be, the uncertainty of what condition it may throw us into, the apprehension of something dreadful to ensue, and the opinion that it will cut us off from all our delights and enjoyments whatsoever, and all means of engagement in the exercises of our activity. Without these concomitants, death were not death: it would be nothing different from sleep, which we never look upon as an evil.

6. Therefore death was made what it is, namely an object of terror, by sin; for Adam in his native simplicity of innocence was so far from fear,

that he wanted even proper caution; but shame and fear entered upon the transgression. Then death began to be death, or an evil, and he first found himself obnoxious to it. But the transgression, or rather proneness of human nature to fall into it, was manifested by the prohibition; agreeably to St. Paul's argument in Rom. vii., I had not known sin but by the law: for I once was alive without the law, but when the commandment came, sin took occasion thereby to deceive me, and slew me: so that in St. Paul's sense of the words, it was true, that Adam did die in the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit. And for the doctrine of original sin, or extending the consequences of Adam's disobedience to his whole posterity, I have already delivered my thoughts of it in the Chapter on Redemption, tending to show that his offence was not operative upon the constitution of his descendants, but declarative of human nature, like an essay made upon a little bit in a parcel of reputed gold, which being found to be base metal, must prove a condemnation of the whole mass.

If this exposition be thought admissible, it will become needless to enter into the disputes that have been raised by Dr. Middleton and others upon the history of the fall: for be it a narrative of real facts, or be it an allegorical description of human nature, the doctrine learned from it will turn out the same, which likewise stands confirmed by experience. We all esteem children in a state of innocence, as not having sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression; and we find them not afraid of death, for indeed they know not what it is. But when they have begun to discern right and wrong, are conscious of misbehaviour which has drawn punishment and mischiefs upon them, have contracted a fondness for the pleasures, been made acquainted with the evils of life, and imbibed the apprehensions of persons around them, then death assumes its ghastly form, and becomes an object of terror and dismay.

Should we take Adam in his uprightness for a representation of innocent childhood, we must imagine him as little apprehensive of death as that: he had heard it denounced as a thing to be avoided, but he knew not what hurt and evil were, having had no experience of them; for our ideas of reflection are only repetitions of some sensation we had experienced before. So he could feel no disturbance in the thoughts of death, of the evil whereof he had no conception: the most he could apprehend from it was a deprivation of the pleasures he enjoyed, but this though undesirable, was not terrible.

But this tranquillity and indifference of mind was no more than an insensibility or exemption from fear, springing from an unconcernedness for the future; which we may presume he would not long have remained under. Could he, and those of his descendants whom he lived to see, have escaped all attacks of temptation, we cannot but suppose they would have improved their faculties to the utmost, and attained all the knowledge that was to be attained thereby. If they had seen no premature deaths among them, yet they must have found upon contemplation of their bodily frame, and of the garden where they dwelt, that neither of them were constructed to last forever. They would have known so much of death, as that it was a dissolution of the human composition; but still not known that it was death, that is, an evil abhorrent to the thought; but rather regarded it as an admonition to examine what might be likely to come after. They then would have put forth their hands and have taken of the tree of life, and lived forever.

7. I believe that tree was never suspected of bearing fruit whose juices would prove an Elixir vitæ efficacious to cement the union between soul and

body so strongly as that it should never be dissolved: therefore we must understand it as figurative of something else, and what else can we suppose it to shadow forth, unless such principles of sound reasoning, as, with due cultivation, would produce an assured expectation of enjoyment and happiness after their dissolution. They could not fail of discovering the unperishable nature of their spiritual part, which was themselves, all else being an adjunct or covering, instrumental to their uses, but no essential or constituent part of their persons. And since we with our lapsed, feeble understandings can discern much of the divine power and beneficence, we must allow them to do the same in a completer, clearer, more satisfactory manner. The purity of their minds would suffer no gross nor erroneous conceptions to mingle in their religion, nor to throw obstacles in the way of its progress,; but would rise to just sentiments of their Maker, his almighty Power, his Intelligence, his Wisdom, his all-comprehensive Providence, his unlimited Goodness. They could have no suspicion of any hurt ever to come from him, having experienced nothing but unceasing bounty. For it has been observed in the Chapter upon Goodness, that our sense of that attribute fluctuates according to the condition of our minds: our mistrusts arise from the evils we see or feel, the mischiefs occasioned by our own miscarriages or those of other people, the melancholy gloom overspreading our thoughts, and the tastelessness of every pleasing reflection generated thereby. When at ease, and successful in our wishes, we can readily see that God is good, and the world a glorious world. Therefore they would confide in the divine Goodness, to provide them another Garden, equally delightful, whenever removed from that of Eden. Their prospect of pleasurable modes of existence following in endless succession, would connect the whole in one unbroken line of duration: so that they would esteem themselves, not as we do, creatures of a few years, but possessed of a life to last forever; regarding the dissolution of their bodies as a passage from one scene of engagement into another. Just as a man in youth, health, vigour, esteems himself in possession of a long life although he knows he shall be cut off from all his amusements before tomorrow by the slumbers of the night.

But this ripeness of knowledge and firmness of faith which would have put them in possession of a life forever, was never arrived at: for they were fruits requiring the united endeavours of numbers to gather them, and the sin of our first parents occasioned their being driven out of reach before there was a third human creature to assist in climbing the tree. And the inbecility of human nature, whereof that sin was declarative, or as Middleton will have it, figurative, is so manifest as to make it appear a romantic supposition that any race of men, however happily circumstanced, should attain such a satisfaction and well-grounded assurance as I have just now decribed. Therefore we all consider ourselves as mortals, in the condition of persons lying under an irrecoverable sentence of death; who is to us the king of terrors, or at best an officer coming with a writ of execution to sweep away all our possessions, our pleasures, our instruments of action, and everything we desire, or wherein we can find solace or employment.

Thus I apprehend it may be understood, how in Adam all have died; for life is not life without enjoyment, which cannot subsist with anxiety and continual alarms: wherefore the philosophers laid down that no state can be pronounced happy, of whose continuance there is an uncertainty. From which uncertainty none but the perfect Wise-man could be exempt; who being an ideal character nowhere actually found upon earth, the Stoics

thence pronounced all men fools and mad, and consequently unhappy; or as translated into Scripture language, dead in trespasses and sins.

8. This temporal death, then, which we lie under during our animal life, must be meant by the declaration. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die. But if this be the Scripture sense of the text, it is not the whole sense. For the main tenor of the Gospel, as all expositors unanimously agree, aims to warn us of another death, consequent upon that specified above, namely, an eternal death, to commence upon dissolution of the body; not an annihilation, nor perpetual insensibility, nor incapacity for all enjoyments of life, but a state of actual misery and suffering. Herein Philosophy joins hands with Religion, representing this life as a preparation for the next, declaring rectitude of sentiment and conduct, called Righteousness in sacred style, as the sole and certain avenue to a future state of bliss; and acknowledging the depravity of human nature which cannot rise to that perfect wisdom which alone can insure a happy exit.

The philosopher indeed considers this depravity as an imperfection rather than a corruption. He thinks himself in a state of childhood, born to greater things than he can now possess, his judgment not yet ripened, and his powers not completely formed: and if he can make a good use of those allotted him, he confides in the goodness of God for having provided his laws of Nature respecting both worlds in such manner, as that upon his emersion from matter he shall find himself invested with larger faculties, and stronger abilities, capable of raising him to that perfection which he can never reach while in this corporeal imprisonment. For he dooms it incongruous with the divine Attributes, that any creature should be placed in a situation which must lead unavoidably into misery, without any wilful negligence of his own, and against his utmost endeavours to extricate himself.

But this imagination our holy Religion overthrows, concluding the whole human race under the dominion of sin; from which no second causes, of those operating upon things visible or invisible, could rescue them without almighty power interposing for their Redemption: for as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive; nor is there any other name given upon earth whereby men may be saved.

9. But what shall we say to the comprehensiveness of that expression, All shall be made alive? Is it universally true that no man shall perish? I wish with all my soul I could find a warrant to say this: but it is what the most glowing Christian Charity dares not advance. Is it then, that all who are saved will be saved that way; or is it that all without exception are put into a capacity of salvation, if they will embrace the terms offered for that purpose? The first of these constructions does little honour to the Christian dispensation, as leaving a total uncertainty how far the benefits of it extend, giving men only a chance for their lives, for perhaps some may be saved thereby, and some may not. And the second will not be found verified by experience of facts: for the terms propounded are Faith in the Messiah, but how many children die before being capable of such Faith? how many pagan nations in ancient and modern ages never heard of a Messiah? Nor shall we ever be able to satisfy gainsayers, that it is consistent with divine Justice to permit multitudes to be born, and die, without ever opening the door to them through which alone they can escape eternal death. Besides, the contrast and comparison with the death by Adam, which was undoubtedly universal, affixes the same sense to the life by Christ.

In order to clear up these difficulties it seems the most rational exposition to understand All collectively of the human race, not distributively of every individual comprised therein: so that it might be necessary, Christianity should prevail in the world, yet not necessary for every single person in the world to be Christian. Because if I am right in the general interest explained in my Chapter on Divine Economy, perfection once introduced among mankind in general, will in due time work perfection in the particular members; those who were true Christians gradually infusing the vivifying principle by sympathy and mutual intercourse into the rest of the species.

But if it be judged orthodox to believe no single soul can be saved without actual Faith in Christ, I have suggested reasons in the Chapter on Redemption tending to prove that those who have had no opportunities afforded them here, may find them in another life. In support of which idea I have drawn arguments from that almost discarded article in the principal of our Creeds, He descended into Hades; from whence it may be inferred that there is a Christian Religion there, as well as upon earth. And at the same time have endeavoured to remove all handle that might be taken therefrom to encourage indifference and procrastination, by showing that nevertheless such, to whom the terms of salvation have been fairly propounded, but rejected or neglected by them, can have no glimpse of probable ground to expect a second offer in their next state of being.

10. Before proceeding further it will be expedient to remark, that life is not given directly by the hand of Christ, but he gives it because he gives that upon which it will follow of course: as a poor man may say his victuals and clothing are given him by one who has furnished him with money to procure them. And herein the comparison continues between Christ and Adam: for though we are taught in one place, that in Adam all die, this is explained by another text which declares, that sin entered by Adam, and death by sin: in like manner are we warranted to say that righteousness entered by Christ, and life by righteousness. For as death is the wages or natural consequence of sin: so is life the wages of righteousness, the fruit it will naturally produce without further divine interposition than was needful for planting and watering the tree.

Thus we see the deliverance it behoves us to lay hold of is a deliverance from that sin which entered by Adam, or rather that sinfulness of our nature which was manifested by his disobedience: which therefore was a prejudication of all who should partake of that nature, although they had not sinned after the similitude of his transgression. It remains to consider wherein this sinfulness or promptitude to do wrong consists: and we shall find it to lie in the prevalence of our appetites and passions over our judgment, or a thraldom of the Will.

I shall not repeat the metaphysical disquisition upon Volition pursued in the Chapter on Freewill: I need only to call to remembrance what has been said there concerning the determination of our judgment being ordinarily taken for our Will, and that Liberty, in the most common acceptation, is understood of such a situation wherein there is no obstacle to prevent that Will from taking effect. For what we judge expedient we resolve to do, and think we shall do it: but our imbecility is such that desires and fancies start up too strong for our resolves, and carry us into a directly contrary conduct. This state of the carnal man is described by St. Paul, Rom. vii. I allow not that which I do: for what I would, that do I not: but what I would not, that do I. I see another law in my members re-

belling against the law of my mind, and leading me captive unto the law of sin.

The very essence of sin pre-supposes this struggle between the rational and sensitive faculties styled by St. Paul the law of his mind and law of his members. Children do many things before arriving at the use of reason for which we are forced to reprimand them, but these are not sins because they know no better: it is their discernment of what is right, or having a law of their minds, that renders the continuance of those practices sinful. Thus the same St. Paul observes that he had not known sin unless by the law, for without the law sin was dead, but when the commandment came, sin first gave signs of life.

11. This vigour and untamable violence of the sensitive faculties perpetually confines our views to objects of sense, to narrow aims, and gratifications of appetite, or worldly desires; cramping the understanding so that it cannot open wide enough to take in a comprehensive view of Nature, nor penetrate to the origin and Author of Nature; but lies liable to be continually overclouded with superstitions or misapprehensions of the divine Nature and Attributes. Christ has declared that blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God: blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the Children of God. Whereby seems necessarily implied that, while impure or contentious, no man can see or be truly called the child of God, that is, possess just sentiments and proper affections with regard to him; which in other passages is expressed by entering the kingdom of heaven, coming to the Father, loving him with all the heart, being one with him, and doing his Will.

Neither were the judicious among the pagans insensible of this truth, that purity and holiness were necessary to the right understanding of things invisible. Wherefore they exhorted to purge the mental eye from all films contracted by constant attention to sensual objects, to refine the soul by the study and practice of philosophy: they recommend a total apathy, that is an exemption from passion and all inordinate desires or aversions, as indispensably requisite to complete the perfection of Wisdom; and hold that such souls as had not been so refined, would, upon quitting their bodies, still have many carnal particles adhering to them, which must weigh them down to greater depths of wretchedness than they had ever sunk into during their abode upon earth.

12. We have now discovered what is the evil from which we are offered deliverance by the Redemption, namely, that weakness and consequent darkness of the Will or understanding, which subjects it to the tyranny of appetite, and renders the soul incapable of resisting the impulses of that foulness worked thereinto from the gross corporeal frame whereto we are vitally united. The Philosopher may build what hypothesis he pleases for getting rid of the foulness. He may say, that Nature has provided future punishments for purgation of contaminated souls: that as none pass out of life without a degree of impunity, all without exception must undergo some course of discipline suited to their respective complaints: some to be hung in the winds for sweetening, some plunged into rapid waters to wash away their filth; from others the dross shall be burnt out by scorching flames. It is not my business to contest the point with him, for I have not undertaken the office of a champion for our Religion, to overthrow all opponents; but have proposed only to inquire fairly and particularly what are the doctrines it teaches; and I think nobody can deny it to be one, that there was no provision of second causes sufficient to work the deliverance of human

nature, but that it was effected by almighty Power interposing for that purpose.

Here it is likely I shall be stopped in my career with an objection of the free-thinker, that it is highly blasphemous and injurious to the divine Wisdom, to imagine that God should have contrived his order of second causes so unskilfully as that a whole species of his creatures must be for ever miserable, unless he interfered with his own hand to correct the defects in his original plan. Upon which I shall observe, that his objection strikes beside the mark, being not levelled at the Christian faith, but the notions of it imbibed from the nursery; where the fall of Man may have been looked upon as an unexpected event for which God in his infinite mercy afterwards provided a remedy to cure an evil he had not intended should befall. Whereas, if the objector had gone a few steps out of the nursery to fetch his Testament, he might have found there that the method of Redemption was contained in the eternal purpose of God, and consequently the depravity of our Nature, which it was provided to rectify, was eternally foreseen.

Or if he have an invincible averseness against all supernatural interposition whatever, I have shown him in the Chapter on Economy what grounds he has in history and experience to regard the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian dispensations, as a series of incidents signally providential: having made appear before, in my Chapter on things Providential, that an event ought to be ranked among them which was produced by an extraordinary concurrence of causes, and attended with extensive and beneficial consequences.

13. But this representation of the Christian Faith being introduced by natural operation of a chain of second causes, proceeded from a desire of being as comprehensive as I could, so as to bring persons to entertain a favourable opinion, and make their proper uses of it, who could not digest all its articles. Which scheme we must now lay aside, being incompatible with the whole tenor and spirit of the Sacred Writings, the subject of our present inquiry: for they refer everywhere to an almighty Power interposing miraculously to rescue Mankind from an evil, absolutely inevitable and irremediable by the laws of Nature ar any operation of second causes.

Now in order to maintain the character I have assumed in this Volume of a reconciler between Religion and Reason, although I cannot pretend to prove with some eminent divines that the latter conducts to the necessity of such interposition, yet shall attempt to show that it carries no repugnance thereto, nor exhibits anything that should render it incredible; and for that purpose shall recur to some discoveries already stricken out by the light of Natnre, to take for my foundation.

Whoever will turn back to my Chapter on Providence, will find exhibited there so large an idea of the Divine Intelligence as to make it conceivable that God might have finished his Creation from all eternity, and rested from his works ever since: having once for all formed so perfect a plan, and established so complete a system of universal Nature, as that it should run on for ever without needing any farther touch of his hand; the causes of generation being adapted to those of corruption, and provision being made by the activity given his spiritual creatures for continually repairing those immense decays of motion, occasioned by the mutual impulses and resistance of his inanimate or material creatures.

Nevertheless, it is not incongruous with our ideas of him, that he should have acted otherwise, and constructed his plan of Nature incomplete, not for want of skill or abilitv to do better, but purposely to leave room for in-

terpositions of his almighty Power, and manifest himself in his character of Governor to his intelligent creatures. And for the probability of his so doing, I have suggested arguments in § 10, 11, of the same Chapter; and in the following sections have drawn proofs from the contemplation of this Earth we inhabit, and of the planetary system, that he must have actually interposed in the formation, or as vulgarly called the creation, of this visible world. I have not indeed been able by the light of Nature to discover evidence of the like interposition in the moral world, yet the rules of analogy direct us to infer a probability of it from the manifest tendency of this sublunary system to Chaos and confusion, and remove all repugnance of reason against receiving that article from Revelation.

14. Add farther, that experience testifies there is a mixture of evil, as well moral as physical, in the world: from whence Reason concludes there is a necessity it should be so in the Nature of things as established on their original creation, evil having therein been made productive of good, and indispensably requisite to support and maintain that fund of happiness abounding throughout the Universe. Reason indeed gathers from contemplation of the divine Attributes, that the good exceeds the evil in an immense proportion, and confides that there are many forms of Being, among the whole host of perceptive creatures, totally exempt from the latter. Nevertheless, if there must be evil, there must be some species of creatures obnoxious to it; and nothing hinders that this should be man rather than any other species you can imagine. Neither can we feel a repugnance against the supposition that man came forth from the hands of his Maker without any taint of evil upon him, but was made liable to receive it from the influence of material or other agents: and that a remedy was provided to rescue him from such evil as soon as the purposes, whatever they may be, whereto it was necessary, were answered.

Now whether provision be made of such remedy by natural or supernatural means, it equally obviates all impeachment of the Divine Goodness and Equity. For if a parent sends his son to stay a considerable time abroad, we expect he should furnish him with remittances sufficient to subsist him the whole time: but if he knew he intended to go over himself before it was lapsed, though he did not set him out first with full subsistence, we should not suspect him deficient either in forecast or kindness.

Agreeably to these decisions of reason we see the Scriptures representing man as originally placed in a state of happiness, to continue while nothing external interfered to disturb it, but with an imbecility, evidenced by Adam's transgression, incapable of resisting the first temptation that should accost him: that by repeated offence he contracted a depravity which would continually grow worse and worse, until it plunged him into the lowest depths of misery, nor could any skill or endeavours of his own prevent the mischief, neither was there any provision of second causes that could assist him. Nevertheless, God in his eternal purpose had provided a remedy for restoring him to his primitive condition, and supplying him with a vigour that should be proof against all attacks.

15. Little doubt can be made that the interposition here spoken of must be understood only of the Incarnation and occasional effusions of the Holy Ghost. I do not forget that the miracles and prophecies recorded in both Testaments are parts of the Christian belief: but miracle, as I have observed in the Chapter upon that article, is a particular species of supernatural operations. Those who hold the souls of children created from time to time as there is a fœtus ready to receive them, or that there is an

interposing Providence continually watching over and correcting the errors of chance and freewill, must ascribe these events to an immediate operation of Almighty Power, yet never call them miraculous because they are necessary for carrying on the order and courses of Nature.

Whereas miracles are not wanted for necessary uses of their own, but as evidences, striking to the sense, of something more important to be manifested by them. Therefore we must confine the deliverance of mankind from its state of imbecility and wretchedness to the two causes specified above.

Those two articles depend upon the Trinity, which is counted the profoundest of mysteries: but a mystery ceases to be such as soon as revealed, that is, understood. For St. Paul speaks of the Christian faith as a mystery, because it remained such to the Jews, being shadowed to them in types and figures which led them to the expectation of a temporal monarch coming with power to make the conquest of the world, but at the same time poor and mean, a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief: which things appeared contradictory, and consequently mysterious. But when it was revealed that Jesus was the Messiah predicted, who worked out deliverance, not by earthly power and dominion, but by a life of righteousness terminating in a voluntary death, this was a plain proposition intelligible to the meanest capacities; even those who do not believe it true, yet clearly understand what is contained in the assertion.

So the confusedness of our ideas concerning substantial identity and union, involves us in mystery and contradiction. We apprehend that one individual substance may be split into many, and that several united together may produce a new substance of a compound never in being before: which perpetually carries us counter to the admonition of our doctors against either dividing the substance or confounding the Persons. I have already done my endeavours towards preventing those mistakes, in my Chapter on the Trinity, and need only observe here, what nobody can deny to be the orthodox doctrine of our Church, that it was the same indivisible Almighty Being who governs all Nature as also the affairs of men by his ordinary and extraordinary Providence, who took upon him our Nature by an union with the human soul and body of Jesus, and who works occasionally upon our hearts to will and to do according to his good pleasure. That he did not thereby become three different Beings or Substances having transactions with one another, but assumed the appearance of three Persons or Characters, each having a separate office and distinct province of action.

16. Let us now try to settle the proper conception of Union, which is not a transubstantiation, nor consubstantiation extending throughout the same portion of space, nor yet the addition of a new substance to those entering the compound; but when things are so mingled together that we cannot distinguish them asunder, and so joined for a continuance as that we never see them separated again.

Which uninterrupted continuance of coalescence I apprehend characterizes the second Person in distinction from the third: the office of the one being to unite with the subject indissolubly; of the other, to accede for small spaces from time to time to different subjects as occasion shall require, and in such secret manner as that, if I am right in my idea, we can never know, when the access was actually made.

That there is a similitude of operation between them stands likewise evidenced by the style and language of Scripture. The figurative expressions of oil and anointing are applied equally to the effects produced by both.

The reception of Grace by the Holy Ghost is termed a Chrism, or anointing: and the characteristic appellation of the united God and Man is that of the Messiah, that is, the chrismed or anointed. Jesus is said to have been conceived by the Holy Ghost, to grow in Grace, and to have the Spirit descend upon him at Jordan.

Neither is the term uniting, or other expression of similar import, withholden from the regenerate Christian, of whom it is said the Father shall come unto him and make his abode with him and dwell in him, and that he shall receive power to be one of the sons of God.

From all which may be gathered that the application of the Deity to every sanctified believer was the same in kind with that to Jesus: but immensely inferior in degree, and temporary, with large intervals of disunion between. So that when we act under influence of the Spirit, still our acts have a mixture of imperfection; and in far the greater part of our acts we offend daily, being left to ourselves without any assistance, whereas Jesus being styled the Holy Child, we must conclude, that holiness accompanied him constantly and uninterruptedly from the cradle to the cross.

This interpretation steers clear of several heretical notions broached in former times; as that Jesus was a phantom, having no material body nor rational soul, but being an appearance exhibited to the senses by the divine agency impressing ideas of various actions and discourses passing before them: or that he was a mere man, and the Divinity within him nothing more than a power of virtue, like that which in a lower degree rested upon Moses and Elijah. As likewise the Arian opinion, that he was a Being of higher order than the Angels, singular in his kind, created with extraordinary power and intelligence sufficient to answer the purposes of the Redemption. For by the account above stated of the Christian Doctrine it appears, that Jesus was a real man, like unto us in all respects, sin only excepted: that the Divinity united to him, which together with his human soul and body composed one Christ, was the Supreme Being substantially and inseparably present with him, supplying all imperfections in the created parts, And that human Nature was so far lost in corruption and weakness, that no created power in the universe, nor anything less than an immediate interposition of Omnipotence could suffice to deliver it.

17. From hence we may learn what were the immediate effects of the union upon the soul of Jesus: for we have no warrant to pronounce it produced any upon his body, being told that he was in human infirmity and in all other things like unto us, sin only excepted. Even the Resurrection was not a consequence of the union, being the work of God in his Paternal, not his Filial character: nor yet the Ascension, far he did not fly, but was taken up into heaven. Which restriction of the difference between him and other men solely to an exemption from sim, as cited just now, together with the similitude in the operation of the Holy Spirit pointed out before, directs us to understand, that the union did not produce any extraordinary intelligence, or knowledge, or enlargement of the faculties, but a continual supply of force to what St. Paul calls the law of his mind above the law of his members: so that his judgment was never perverted to decide amiss, nor was he in any single instance turned aside from his resolution by the temptations of pleasure, danger, or pain.

So the purpose and effect of the union was to rectify the sinful nature of Jesus; for that he did partake of a sinful nature by his birth from the woman, I see no reason nor scruple to doubt. Some I know have been carried by an inconsiderate and hasty zeal for the honour of their Saviour, to insist that

his soul was originally pure and perfect beyond that of all other men: but zeal operates very variously in different subjects. For my part, I must acknowledge that my zeal for the glory of God gives me a bias to imagine him less perfect than the rest of Adam's race: for I have so high an idea of the Divine Power as to believe it capable of sanctifying the most abandoned profligate soul that ever inhabited a human body; therefore if I could admit the doctrine of an intrinsic difference in souls, should stand persuaded, that God had chosen to unite himself with the very worst of the whole species, in order to manifest his Power the more fully.

But as I happen to have found no evidence of any such difference in my observations upon human nature, but that all souls are originally alike until corrupted in various degrees by vicious courses: it follows necessarily that the soul of Jesus was in itself neither better nor worse than our own. He was a descendant of Adam, and when it is declared that in Adam all have sinned, no exception is made of him: nor is this contradictory to the position of his being without sin. For that relates to the commission of actual sin, which we ourselves were not guilty of in Adam: for none of us were accomplices in the fact of his transgression. Therefore when it is said in Adam all have sinned, we must necessarily understand thereby, as explained in the foregoing sections, that all have partaken of a nature evidenced by the fall to be too weak and frail to stand against temptation; which nature the child Jesus partook of, sharing it in common with us. Nor are there marks left unrecorded by the Holy Spirit, in the circumstances of the last agony, and other particulars pointed out in § 10 of my Chapter on the Trinity, which indicate a natural imbecility and struggle with the carnal law of the members rising in rebellion against the law of the mind: which attacks of the enemy, together with the distress and sufferings brought upon the champion of our cause, may be regarded as one completion of the prophecy, that the serpent should bruise the heel which trampled upon its head.

The same observation may persuade us that the human nature of Christ was not perfected instantly upon the first Incarnation: for as weakness is turned into corruption by repeated acts of sinning, so it can be raised to invincible strength only by repeated acts o. righteousness; nor was it purposed by an exertion of Almighty Power to remodel the constitution, but to meliorate it. Perhaps Adam might have repaired the damage of his fall by a subsequent unsinning obedience; his nature being capable of a recovery, and even of improvement and melioration, by applying the proper means, had he been capable of making the application. But the Scripture represents it as impossible for him to do any good thing with his lapsed powers; and so indeed many philosophers allow that no man acts upon the sole principle of rectitude: therefore all mankind had been lost and undone for ever without the coming of the Redeemer, in whom the Godhead constantly residing restrained him from all actual sin, making him grow in grace and favour with God and Man, by gradual progress bringing the mental organs to such a firm and vigorous constitution as enabled him to perform an unsinning obedience in all trials; thereby placing human Nature in a better condition than when it first came forth from the hands of its Maker, for it was created in happiness and innocence, but subject to dangers which might deprive it of both; whereas now it was restored to the same happiness and innocence, but provided further with a security against all hazard of losing them. Thus to be consistent with Scripture and the doctrines of our Church, it becomes us to raise our idea of the purity and per-

fections of our Saviour as high as imagination can carry them, yet ought we to ascribe them all to the Divinity united with him.

18. Nevertheless, these effects of the Union, so far as hitherto described, seem to terminate in the person of Jesus, not extending to the rest of the world, nor showing him to have been the Saviour of mankind. But though an interposition of almighty Power was necessary for restoring and perfecting their nature, it was not necessary that interposition should be applied directly to every particular member of the species. For I have shown in the Chapter on Providence that in all cases of supernatural interposition there is likewise a disposing Providence, ordering a chain of second causes for completing the design intended thereby. It is not the custom of our almighty Governor to do much with his own hand, he applies it rarely: for to do more than requisite for manifestation of his Power and Dominion, might prove an impeachment of his Wisdom, nor are his works made to want it often. He comprised his interpositions in the same original plan with his secondary agents, and so contrived the latter as that they would sometimes run amiss, yet upon a few turns given them upon extraordinary occasions, they should fall into the right course, and thenceforward proceed of themselves to bring forth the destined event.

We know the force of example, sympathy, and instructions given in consummate wisdom, to work strange alterations in the characters of men. Some philosophers have been positive that could we behold Virtue in her genuine colours, unclouded by any heterogeneous mixture, she would captivate all hearts; and I have attempted to make appear in the Chapter on Economy how one perfect man may communicate his influence to others near him, who by degrees may spread it throughout a whole community. Since then the imaginary Wise-man of the ancients was realized in the person of Jesus, why should we deem it unlikely that he, by the pattern he has set before us in a life of righteousness, by the love he has shown in his sufferings and death, by the doctrines, the precepts, the institutions, the Religion he has delivered, together with some occasional aids of the Holy Spirit, should naturally raise human nature to its utmost perfection, and provide us with glorified bodies upon dissolution of our present, without needing any supernatural operation upon us at our entrance into another life, or intercession for further extraordinary favours than have been already bestowed.

Nevertheless, the effects which might be expected have not been produced in this sublunary globe; multitudes being born and dying without any possibility of sharing in them, and none having ever attained the righteousness of their pattern; for the very best, not excepting the Apostles, have offended in many things: from whence may be inferred, that what has been done here will continue to produce its consequences in the next stage of being, until it has perfected individuals, and spread to the whole human race, or such part of it as has not wilfully rejected the opportunities already offered them.

19. We have now a clue towards explaining certain technical terms much used in all Christian discourses. They are figurative and mysterious, and then most mysterious when taken most closely in the literal sense; therefore here it is particularly incumbent upon us to penetrate into the spirit contained under the letter: for as soon as a man can enter fully into the spirit of what is said to him, he finds a light instantly break forth, which dispels all obscurities, and unveils the mystery. I know there are many people utterly averse to all rational explanations; they look upon every

attempt to pry into sacred mysteries as a profanation; and though they sometimes seem fond of expounding difficult articles, yet is their exposition such as casts no light but rather darkness visible. It amuses, it transports, it astonishes, fills with a sacred awe and hurry of spirits, but conveys no clear idea, nor any real information; as if Ignorance were the mother of Devotion. Ignorance perhaps may be the mother, but a child will never grow to vigorous manhood who is kept always in his mother's lap: and the attempt to confine him there, proceeds often from sinister design, because he will be more governable and susceptible to take any ply of zeal which may be wanted for private ends. Sometimes it arises from want of skill to do better, in such as have no more knowledge than just to qualify them for nurses, and a secret ambition of getting as many children under their tuition as they can possibly collect; and sometimes it may spring from an injudicious imitation of the Scripture manner, which abounds in parables and dark sayings and riddles, so that seeing one may not see, and hearing one may not understand.

But it should be considered, that the Scripture language must appear more enigmatical to us than it was originally intended to be: for it was calculated for the Jews, and most of the figures employed therein having been adopted from the Jewish doctors, may be presumed familiar, and readily intelligible to that people. And for what were designedly riddles, they were delivered for holding our attention to the pursuit of one object requiring diligence to investigate it: for in the very nature of a riddle, it perplexes at first, but is not past all finding out. Therefore we may go on without fear or scruple, as under no danger of a profanation in unravelling the mysteries by that exercise of our best sagacity and industry upon them which they were given to us to excite.

20. To begin with Redemption, the leading term introductory to most of the rest: it signifies literally the purchase of a captive slave from his master, by money or other valuable consideration. But the Redemption of Mankind was from thraldom under the Serpent, and was effected by bruising his head, which can hardly be called a valuable consideration given for the purchase. Or if you will say, as vulgarly apprehended, that the purchase was made from God, who being supreme Lord and Master paramount of all captives, could command them out of the hands of their immediate owners, what money or thing of value did he receive? what vacant space was there in the treasury of his riches that could admit an addition to increase his wealth? what did he lose by the recovery of a fallen race that should require a compensation for the damage? And yet in our days the term is so constantly restrained to cases of slavery or pawnage bought off with money, that I do not recollect ever to have heard it applied to prisoners of war in civilized countries, although such frequently obtain their enlargement for a certain sum; because they are not regarded as a property of the persons who have them in their power, nor consequently as an object of sale.

But among the Jews, Redemption had a wider latitude, being extended to every deliverance from servitude, by what means soever effected. Thus in the Old Testament God is frequently styled the Lord who redeemed Israel from the hand of Pharaoh, out of the house of bondage, the Lord that bought them: yet nobody can apprehend it done by a bargain made, or any gratuity given to Pharaoh or other princes, to resign up their right of dominion over their slaves.

Nevertheless, these expressions having been frequently used, gave occasion for introducing the like into the Christian dialect; such as the ransom for sin, that we are bought with a price, and the Satisfaction made to divine Justice. It must be owned that the phrase of being bought with a price is not quite alien to our present modes of speech; for when a person has met with many grievous accidents in the pursuit of an advantage he obtains at last, we commonly say that he has earned it dearly, that it has cost him a vast deal of pains and anxiety. Therefore Christ having debarred himself from what we esteem the enjoyments and conveniences of life, and submitted to a cruel and ignominious death, in prosecution of his work of our deliverance, we may say properly that he paid dearly by his self-denial and suffering, for the benefits he procured for us. Yet still this amounts to no more than a half purchase, where something valuable is parted with, but there is nobody to receive it.

As for Satisfaction, that is plainly a very abstract and figurative representation of Justice as a Person, who was interested in our punishment, and could not recede from her demands without receiving an amends adequate in value. By which figure was shadowed forth the immutable Nature of things established by the Creator, whereby righteousness and innocence were made indispensably necessary to the possession and security of happiness: which being lost in any part of the creation, occasioned a gap in the all-perfect plan not to be otherwise supplied unless by some efficacious method contrived for the restoration of righteousness and innocence.

21. Atonement and Sacrifice, together with the epithets Expiatory and Propitiatory, grow from the same root with that of Ransom: for equally with that, they relate to the giving of something highly prized by the receiver, only with this difference, that instead of money paid in consequence of a bargain driven, they carry the idea of lost favour regained by some acceptable present. This method of reconciliation being prescribed by the Jews in the ceremonial law, and likewise practised by the Heathens, seems to have introduced among both an opinion, that after having angered God by their transgressions, they might bring him into good humour again by the sweet-smelling savour exhaling from their sacrifices, or the magnificence and beauty of their oblations. But who in these times of better knowledge can imagine, that God is to be bribed out of his favours, that anything can put him aside from his purpose, or render him propitious when he was otherwise disposed? The phrase of bringing him to our desires carries the same import with that in common use among sailors, when they tell you that before you make into a particular port, you must bring such a hill to bear directly over such a point of the shore: they do not imagine that any efforts of theirs can stir the hill an inch from its place, but that they can work their ship till it comes into the spot lying in a line with the two objects described. So oblations and sacrifices could have no avail to move the heavenly Powers, but operated solely upon the offerers by bringing them so far as the carnal ceremony or heathenish rite could do, into such courses of sentiment and conduct whereto the heavenly Powers were always propitious.

The same reasoning may be applied to the sacrifice of Christ: it could have no efficacy to change the immutable God, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, or to turn him from severity and Justice to graciousness and Mercy; but was efficacious for raising the human race to that righteousness, which in his original constitution of universal Nature he had made the sole avenue to eternal life. In this light we shall see the value of his sacrifice immensely surpassing that of all others: for they could only

produce an imperfect, temporary reverence and religious fear, and resolution to do right, in a few persons, whereas his will in due time work a complete and permanent righteousness throughout all Mankind in general. And we may add to our estimation by recurring to another use of the figure commonly made among ourselves: for we say a man has sacrificed his pleasures, his health, his fortune to the good of his Country, when he has pursued it by measures detrimental to them all; yet without any thought of an oblation made to Heaven. Therefore it must greatly endear our Saviour to our affection to reflect how much he has sacrificed to rescue us from a wretchedness, which by all natural causes was absolutely irremediable.

22. The greatest sacrifice being that of life, terminating in agonies, and scourgings, and despondency, and at last a cruel death upon the cross, has occasioned the Redemption to be generally spoken of as purchased by that sacrifice alone, expressed often by another figure, not likely to be taken literally, that of our sins being nailed to the tree.

But as it is no unprecedented thing to accumulate figure upon figure, this of the sacrifice is re-painted by another, that of bloodshedding: and much talk has passed among the pious concerning the precious blood of Christ, whereby we were redeemed. As if the material blood in his body was of a richer composition than any other blood, containing an occult quality, or magic virtue, a vivifying Spirit, efficacious to purge away all seeds of corruption and mortality that could be found in the world. And the Papists carry this notion so far as to insist that no man can be saved without actually swallowing the body together with the blood included therein.

But I see no warrant to pronounce the blood of Jesus a whit better than that of any other man who was born with a good constitution, and had lived a sober, temperate life: therefore it was not the blood shed but the act of shedding that availed to our benefit. Nor yet can the shedding be taken strictly; for the crucifixion was not a manner of execution to cause much effusion of blood, excepting only a few drops trickling from the wounds made in the fleshy parts by the nails. But the Jewish sacrifices having been constantly made by letting out the whole mass of blood from the victims, this circumstance came to stand for all kinds of death in general; and so we should still understand it to this day. For I suppose anybody might allege the text, Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, in justification of his hanging a criminal who had murdered another by poisoning, or smothering, or drowning, although there were not a drop of blood spilt either in the crime or the punishment. Therefore we may say, without imputation of heterodoxy, that the blood was no otherwise precious, than as it served to sustain that life which he sacrificed for our sakes.

Nor yet can we suppose any benefit or delight accruing to the Father from seeing him expire on the cross: so that even his death was not expiatory or propitiatory in itself, nor any further than as it was necessary for establishing the authority of the Religion he had instituted, for the restoring and perfecting human nature throughout the whole species of creatures partaking thereof.

23. The appellation of Merits can no more be taken in the strict primary sense than any of the former; for then it would imply a real benefit conferred, or profit procured deserving of its adequate recompense. If anybody has done you some signal service in your health, your family, or your fortune, he has a merit with you, and you owe him a return of the like whenever an opportunity for making it shall be afforded. But what merit had even Christ himself with the Father? what obligation could his righ-

teousness and sufferings lay him under? what accession was made thereby to his Power, his Intelligence, his Wisdom, or any other Attribute? You will find nothing tending that way in the sacred records, which all along represent the restoration of fallen Man as a Free Grace of the Father, not a debt to the Son.

Let us then reflect on the ordinary modes of speech in daily use among us, and we may recollect that Merit is often applied to skill and ability sufficient to go through with the undertaking we have under contemplation. A man of merit in his profession is one who possesses the talents, the dexterity, and knowledge, requisite for performing the functions of it. The merits of a cause in contradiction to forms and modes of pleading, are those circumstances attending it, which we apprehend of force to weigh with the Jury. Now in this sense we cannot but acknowledge the merits of Christ all-sufficient, able abundantly to save to the uttermost, and that the stream of living waters whereof he was the fountain, will never run dry so long as there is a thirsty soul wanting to be refreshed by them.

24. That we are saved by the merits of Christ, nobody can deny to be a part of the Christian doctrine: yet I shall not scruple to assert in the same breath, that we must be saved, if at all, by our own merits. As much a contradiction, and as shocking to the pious ear, as this may seem, I hope to make it good both from Scripture and from Philosophy. Whoever will study carefully the eleven first Chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, with the aid of Mr. Locke, may see that it is the main scope of St. Paul's argument to show, that both Jews and Gentiles were under a necessity of resorting to Christ: in the course of which argument he admits the law to be holy, and just, and good, the terms of the Covenant being, Do this and thou shalt live; but the Jew did not do this, that is, did not fulfil the law, for he that offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole. To the Gentile likewise the Divine Power and Godhead was evidently displayed in the works of the Creation, so that being without the Law, he was a law unto himself: nevertheless forgetting the invisible God, he gave himself up to all manner of unnatural filthy lusts.

The Philosophers, too, asserted that none but the Wise-man could be secure of happiness, who became such by having a love of rectitude constantly predominant above all his other desires, and urging him invariably to shape his actions thereby; for if he ever acted wrong, it was plain in that instance there was some other motive weighing with him more powerfully: but that there never yet has been such a Wise-man existing upon earth.

Therefore the Gospel, and I may add Philosophy, hath concluded all under sin, whereby all have fallen short of the glory of God, or eternal life: not because the righteousness of either Law, that of Moses or that of Nature, were incapable of giving life; but because the professors of both were incapable of ever raising themselves to such righteousness by an unsinning obedience. This righteousness then is the proximous cause operating to Salvation, for without holiness no man shall see the Lord: nevertheless, are we taught to rely wholly upon the Merits of Christ for our Salvation, because they are the sole and certain cause operating to the attainment of that righteousness.

25. It is easy to see that I have hitherto spoken of Salvation as an entire deliverance from the power of death, or an actual possession of eternal life: in which sense no man has or ever will attain it in this world. We might attain it here too by our own merits, but we have none, nor can get any:

our hopes of ever reaching it elsewhere must rest solely upon the merits of Christ.

But there is a looser sense wherein a man is said to be saved, when he is going on in the straight road leading to salvation: still the certainty of this road having such termination depends upon the merits of Christ, efficacious to pave a way of Religion which should conduct human nature to its full perfection. Nevertheless, we must travel the road by our own righteousness, not indeed that of works, but that which is of faith, and of works only so far as needful to evidence and strengthen our faith. The merits of Christ are the cause operating to righteousness; but faith the pipe turning the stream of operation upon ourselves, instilling the living waters, the vivifying principle of Rectitude or Holiness, which may daily grow more and more predominant over our appetites and aversions, annul the law of our members, and bring us gradually under obedience to the law of our minds.

There is still another sense wherein a man may be said to be saved by faith alone, before attaining the righteousness which is of faith. If you knew a person labouring under a complication of distempers which must prove his destruction, and were persuaded there was some one eminent physician, of skill fully sufficient to deal with them, but against whom the patient had conceived an unaccountable aversion: though upon that account you might pronounce him a dead man, yet if afterwards by much labouring the point you could overcome his prejudices you would be ready to cry, Now he is safe, presuming that he would instantly apply, and certainly receive benefit from the doctors' prescriptions. In this view we find it frequently repeated in Scripture, that whosoever believeth in the Son shall be saved: and Mr. Locke, in his Reasonableness of Christianity, makes the belief of Jesus being the Messiah, sufficient to denominate a man a Christian, and entitle him to all the benefits of the Gospel covenant. For this is an entrance upon the road; and if the entrance be made with sincerity and thorough heartiness, which God only can know, although the convert should be suddenly cut off, there is no doubt of his faring well in the next world, as was the case of the penitent thief. But though the road be certain, the perseverance of the traveller is not certain, for some have fallen off from the faith they once embraced; but if the faith, being allowed time to grow, produce no crop of righteousness, such as this sublunary climate is capable of ripening, we must pronounce it a dead faith, having no vigour to push forth the genuine fruit.

So that it is needful to observe the various degrees of force at times attending the same expression, for else it will lead us into dangerous mistakes: for a man may justly claim a rank among the saved, yet remain in a very ticklish, uncertain condition. Nay, he may actually be safe for the present, yet by too great security and supineness cast himself out of that state: therefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.

26. The terms Mediation and Intercession seem at first sight to exhibit a prospect of some further exertions of Omnipotence obtained from the Father, which he grants, not of his own mere motion, but for the sake of gratifying his Son. This representation of God being worked upon by paternal fondness, and drawn by importunities to take measures he should not otherwise have thought of, must give great handle for cavil to the free thinker, against which we shall find much difficulty to make a solid defence.

Besides that the stupendous work of the Incarnation, together with occasional assistances by the Holy Spirit, have rendered all further supernatural operations needless, the touches given by them have turned the course of second causes into their right channel, so that from thenceforward they may proceed unerringly to accomplish their destined purpose, the Redemption of Man. We want nothing now from the Father, more than the continuance of his disposing providence, and support of the laws of universal Nature he has established: for he has given all power to the Son, upon whom we may place a sure dependence.

And imputed righteousness is a very abstract idea, therefore the more surprising it should be so current among persons who affect to run down all abstractions, and to deal altogether in plain language, which he that runs may read. In the imagination of the running reader, it will carry the face of something solid, you can hold in your hand, and may be delivered from one person to another, like a purse of money, upon delivery whereof he may become rich who was poor before.

But whoever will stand still a while to consider attentively what he reads, may discern that these terms bear a reference to the completion of the plan of universal Nature by the coming of Christ. For Nature is the work of God: what she does, is done by him. For we say truly that God giveth us our daily bread, although it comes to us by the production of natural causes, and disposition of his ordinary providence supplying us with means of procuring it. When fortune frowns, it is his hand lying heavy upon us: when things fall out to our wish, we taste of his Mercy and Bounty. Now the plan of second causes was so drawn as to tend inevitably to our destruction, without any provision among them for ever delivering us therefrom. This condition of human nature is called lying under a curse, under the weight of irreconcileable wrath and vengeance: until the Christian Religion, introduced by the greatest of all interpositions, predetermined in the secret counsels or eternal purpose of Heaven, turned the second causes influencing the human Will into a salutary course, which would end in a thorough salvation from all wretchedness, and an investiture in the actual possession of eternal life.

This progressive tendency of our Nature towards perfection is termed a state of reconcilement and favour, and adoption to the privileges of children: the change of disposition in ourselves being represented by the figure of a change of disposition in the Father, from severity and anger to mercy and paternal affection. And as Christ was the agent who by the efficacy of his Religion worked that change, he is therefore styled the Mediator, having management of the great transaction between God and Man, obtaining for us the terms of the new Covenant, bringing down peace from on high, good-will towards men.

27. Yet because the perfection of righteousness, which is the cement of peace and sole object of good-will, remains unattainable in this mortal life, but we have seen reason to conclude there is a Christian Religion in the next world, whereby it must be completed: therefore the Mediation of Christ did not terminate with his death and sufferings, but he still continues to make Intercession at the right hand of God on our behalf, as well during our abode upon earth, as on our removal hence, and appearance at the day of judgment: by which Intercession must be understood, not an importuning of God for fresh blessings he had not intended to bestow, but a gradual forwarding of our progress towards that character of holiness,

which will bring down those blessings; they having been already made the natural consequence and effect thereof in the pre-established Nature of things.

Then for the word Imputation, it implies the placing some article to the account of a particular person; or rather, in common speech, the discharge of an article that had been set down to him. When we would excuse a man for some offensive behaviour, it is customary to say, you must impute it to his ignorance, or indiscretion, or over-hasty zeal to oblige: thus discharging the man from the fault by laying it upon some infirmity whose misguidings are not to be deemed his act: but though it might be a sort of Catachresis in vulgar language, to talk of a good deed, this form of expression is current in the Christian language: for we are not to impute our sins to Christ, for that would be laying the blame upon his instigating us thereto, but his merits to ourselves.

A man's success in the world depends upon his situation, his opportunities, and the merit he has in his profession. Now the profession of a Christian is that of Wisdom or Holiness, of sentiment and conduct, as the only way to the attainment of eternal life. He may confide in the divine Goodness that he shall never want a proper situation, nor opportunities: therefore his prospect of success must be greater or less in proportion to his merit. When he comes to state the account with his own heart, he must be conscious that he has not the merit needful; if he fancies he has, he deceives himself, and a delusive hope is more fatal than desirable; so that the only solid ground of his hopes must be found in the merit or efficacy of his Religion gradually to strengthen his Will or the law of his mind, and invest him with the merit he wants.

By this way he may turn the balance of the account in his favour, being allowed to avail himself of the merit he shall one day acquire, and the performances he shall be enabled to achieve thereby: which I take to be meant by imputing the merits of Christ, that is, placing to the credit side of our account those effects, which they will infallibly produce for the amendment of our Nature.

But they will produce no effects unless their influence be particularly derived upon ourselves by the channel of Faith; therefore it is faith that justifies: not that it makes us actually just, for no man goes out of the world a just man, but the true believer persevering to the end carries out that seed of righteousness which is of faith, that will grow to full maturity in a more salubrious climate. So that although upon his departure hence he should not be put into immediate possession of eternal life, yet he will inherit the promise of it, and fall into the sure and certain road conducting thereto, from which there is no hazard of his being ever turned aside.

And I think any man who has a taste for rectitude, or a hunger and thirst after righteousness, must regard it as a most desirable happiness to be placed in a situation wherein he shall continually be making proficiency towards the perfection of his Nature, and feel the soothing satisfaction of having neglected none of his opportunities; but at the close of every day shall be able to say with truth, I have been moving onward in my progress, I am advanced one step nearer towards the full accomplishment of my wishes. So the death of the righteous or faithful may be the direct passage into a state of happiness, although not into a state of absolute perfection; and that it is not, may be gathered from several hints given in Scripture of a final state surpassing the intermediate in blessedness.

28. We now see the points in dispute between the Philosopher and the

Christian, when they understand one another, reduced to a very narrow compass, still leaving a near resemblance in their features. The one will not admit the fall of Adam by the artifices of the Serpent; but he acknowledges that human nature lies very low immersed in the filth of a material composition, whose corruptions taint the very soul: unable to clear itself from folly and error, or rise in any single instance to the perfect character of Wisdom. He banishes the Devil from his system, yet retains the prevalence of appetite, example, and custom, called the world and the flesh; and allows they will generate anger, revenge, spite, rancour, and other devilish tempers of mind. He will not hear of an Incarnation, that is, the omnipresent God included within a human body, yet he may comprehend a continued application of the Deity to the mental organs of a human frame, and how powerful efficacy the opinion of such an event has had to make a system of Religion prevail in the world. He finds no evidence of a Holy Spirit working upon our hearts, yet is sensible there are seasons of vigour and languor, of clearness and dulness in the mind; that we do not always proceed with the same spirit; that when it is wanting, no man can make any good progress in whatever he undertakes, and that there are certain means of quickening and quenching, or raising and depressing that spirit. He thinks the current belief abounding in absurdities and contradictions, that is, while he beholds it under the disguises of the nursery; for when stripped of them, and appearing in its native colours, with its shape and lineaments drawn out upon one uniform plan, he will discern it regular and consistent throughout, will distinguish between the forms and modes of expression rendered needful by the condition of human nature in the bulk of mankind, and the substance they were calculated to introduce: he will then perceive that the system of righteousness, sanctity, deadness to the world, and heavenly-mindedness, is the same with his own system of rectitude in sentiment and conduct, expressed only in a different language.

If he will not allow a merit in believing some particular proposition, he must be fair enough to grant there is none in disbelieving: neither of them are virtue or vice in themselves, nor make a part of the moral character. Nevertheless, the character may undoubtedly be influenced by opinion, so far as take a total change: so that it is matter of importance what we believe, or disbelieve. Even if he should suppose an opinion erroneous, opinion being neither good nor bad in itself, he will judge of it by its consequences: and since as two negatives make an affirmative, so one error may bring a man round again to the point from which another error had led him astray, he must see the expedience of countenancing an innocent mistake, which will repair the damage done by a more pernicious.

29. But our business here is not with the Philosopher to concern ourselves about what he rejects or approves: we are to examine the Christian doctrines, and penetrate if we can into the true spirit and design of them. It has been already suggested, that the point driven at therein was to bring men to a just apprehension of their Maker, and the relation they stand in to him: and this is confirmed by many passages of Scripture. Christ has declared that he came not to seek his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; that the love of God is one of the two hinges whereon hang all the law and the prophets; that we must strive to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect; and has taught us to pray, Our Father, which art in heaven, thy kingdom come, thy Will be done; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever, all which are elsewhere comprised in the expression of coming to the Father.

Nevertheless, there are multitudes of texts which promise Salvation upon coming to the Son, upon believing that Jesus is the Christ; how then shall we reconcile this seeming discordance? We cannot be safe without coming to the Father; yet we may be made safe by adherence to the Son? I need only one citation to solve this difficulty: No man can come to the Father but through the Son. So that Faith in Christ gives assurance of Salvation as being the remote cause of it, because he is the way and the door, by which we may certainly arrive thereat: for whoever sincerely and heartily believes in the Son, shall infallibly find access to the Father. Were it possible to disjoin a true Faith in Christ from the love of God, it would not avail alone; for many shall say in the last day, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works: yet if they have not done the will of the Father, but were workers of iniquity, they shall be rejected. It seems scarce credible to have ever happened in fact, that persons, possessed of so high a degree of faith as to cast out devils, which was a pitch the first disciples could not rise to, should yet continue workers of iniquity: but this was a case put in speculation to show us that the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, without natural Religion in that perfection whereto they were calculated to raise it, will obtain a passport for no man: wherefore the latter still remains the sole proximate cause of Salvation, and the end whereto the Gospel was designed to conduct us.

30. But what is to be understood by coming to the Father? Not a locomotion surely: for that were superfluous. God is omnipresent, existing substantially throughout the whole infinitude of space: he is close to us, within us, and round about us; so that we should be never the nearer to him for any change of place. But this is a philosophical idea: the plain man apprehends him to live a great way off, some hundred of miles up above in the clouds. Be it so: then what mountains shall we climb, what springs, what carriages, what wings shall we procure to get to him? The expression therefore is evidently figurative, and we must search for the thing signified by the figure. The Scripture informs us, He that cometh to God must believe that he is, must have his mind possessed with a sense of his almighty power and dominion: yet this alone will not suffice: he must believe likewise that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, that is, must be penetrated with a persuasion of the divine Providence, Protection, Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, Goodness, and other Attributes. For if he leaves any of them out, he will be liable to fancy God an unconcerned spectator of sublunary affairs, or unskilful to manage them completely, or a rewarder of none, or that he rewards all indifferently whether they seek him or no. Which Coming, as above explained, is expressed in other places by the beatific vision, seeing God as he is, beholding him face to face, knowing even as also we are known.

There is still another expression, if not directly containing, yet conducting to the same sense. Those upon whom the sentence was pronounced, Depart from me, were workers of iniquity, persons who had neglected to do the Will of the Father, and therefore incapable of access to Christ, or through the sole passage opened by his intercession to the Father. Now we know our actions are all shaped by our Will, and the Will is constantly determined by motives and desires occurring to the thought: wherefore the sentiments of mind figured by Coming and Seeing, must be sentiments of the heart as well as of the understanding. It is not merely right and sound speculative opinion that will answer the purpose, unless it touch our sensi-

bility, and give a right turn to the affections: for they must bring our ideal causes or opinions to become motives of action. When we can discern something inviting and desirable in the things we know, some profit to be worked from them, it will raise a dependence, an expectation and appetence, which must keep the thoughts steadily attentive to their object, and determine the Will to put in practice the means as they severally occur, for making the profit.

But as the wind cannot blow contrary ways at once, so neither can the affections take their right turn while attached to objects of sense, and gratification of the desires excited thereby; wherefore those must be removed from our attention, the soul be purged from all foulness cast upon her by the gross, corporeal machine, the darkness of earthly fumes dispersed away from her mental eye, before she can attain a clearness of vision. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; Without holiness no man can see the Lord; and we are exhorted to die unto the world, to put off the old man, to subdue the fleshly lusts, that is, the impulses of our inferior faculties, in order that we may have our conversation in heaven.

Nevertheless, while in this world we cannot have our conversation altogether there, for the necessary cares of life will claim large intervals of our attention: yet may we obtain some intercourses by prayer, and meditation, or a little serious reflection. We cannot now see God face to face, but as in a glass, darkly, and the dust and smoke of earth will continually throw a foulness upon our glass: yet may we keep ourselves watchful to brush off the soil as fast as falling, and not suffer it to gather in pitchy blotches upon the surface. We cannot gain a near access to the Father, for the world and the flesh will continually retard our progress: yet we may hold ourselves in readiness to improve every opportunity that shall offer to advance a little onward in the way that has been opened for us.

31. We have now found what was the main scope and design aimed at in the Christian dispensation, namely to bring us completely to the Father in some future stage of our existence, and to forward us thitherward during our time of life, with as much speed as the cumbrance of our mortal bodies, the avocations of earthly concerns, and opposition of the world shall leave practicable. It remains next to inquire, by what steps the prosecution of this design is carried on.

Here enmity and zeal combine to lead into the same mistake: both look for the benefits of Christ's mission in an increase of knowledge, and the discovery of new truths: both rest their cause upon this point, and join issue upon the matter of fact. One insists that no improvement has been made in science, that nothing is to be learnt from Revelation except a few mysterious assertions, which, if true, would add nothing to the stock of knowledge. The other avers that life and immortality were first discovered in the Gospel; that till then mankind lay under darkness and ignorance, the wisdom of the wise being nothing better than delusion, error, and trifle, that light and truth sprang forth by Christ, and without him we should scarce have known whether two and two make four.

Whereas this is placing the thing upon a wrong bottom, for the merits of Christ and his Religion do not lie in discoveries of science, not even that respecting life and manners: he came not to make us more knowing but better men. The world knew enough before to have answered their necessary purposes, and if every one in it had lived up to what he knew, it would have been a happy and paradisiacal world: for the eternal power and Godhead were manifest in the works of the creation, but when men knew God,

they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, not by a failure of light, but because they shut their eyes against it. The defect of human Nature lies solely in the weakness of the Will to resist the impulses of appetite, or restrain the rovings of imagination: it does not want quicker faculties, nor additional beams of light, but strength and alertness to make all advantages of those it has. For we have seen that Wisdom, as synonymous with Prudence, or Rectitude, or Righteousness, consists in a sensibility of the heart, and readiness of the Will to follow constantly whatever shall be discerned expedient in the judgment. This imbecility, then, destroying the soundness of Wisdom or full health of the mind, was the disorder which the Gospel was given to cure: no wonder then it should apply no remedies to those parts in the constitution where they were not wanted. Upon which account it was termed foolishness by the Greeks, and I suppose is still counted so by some moderns, who, like them, expect to find some profound secrets of Philosophy laid open. But it is no disparagement of the Gospel to allow, that no such treasures are contained there, nor anything new revealed, unless some articles peculiar to its own plan, as the utter inability of human Nature ever to rescue itself from the wretchedness oppressing it, the distinction of Persons in the Deity, the hypostatic Union, effusions of the Holy Spirit, and such like.

Not that I deny it has in consequence produced an improvement of our knowledge: we may see in the Chapter on Economy, comparing § 13 and 20, how much sounder notions the plain Christian entertains even of Theology and Natural Religion, than the ancient Philosopher. For an enlargement of knowledge will ensue upon a due exercise of the faculties, without any fresh information from elsewhere. So that the sacred oracles were not issued to teach, but put us in a way of finding out for ourselves, by raising a concern and ardency for the discovery of salutary truths, turning the thoughts into profitable trains of reflection, uniting us in the same courses of thinking, and quickening our diligence in the pursuit of them.

These are the salutary remedies wanted in the distempered condition of our Nature. It is true, our knowledge is scanty at best, and our rational faculties imperfect; but imperfection is not the same thing with disease. Our disorder lies in a sluggish indolence, unless roused by some passion, an insensibility to our own interests ever so little remote, and a perpetual misapplication of our powers. We act foolishly and madly: but ignorance is not folly nor madness. He that snatches up the copper handle of a tea kettle, and burns his fingers, deserves our compassion rather than our censure; but if he catches hold on a red hot iron, where he can see the heat, we shall chide him for being a fool and a madman. So it is the sensitive faculties that want to be rectified; imagination and appetite to be disciplined and turned into their proper courses: which they are much better thrown into by reverence and authority, than by reasoning; for they are like the deaf adder, which heareth not the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.

Therefore we find Jesus always speaking with authority, not as the Scribes; the Scribe, who was expounder of the Law, and the Philosopher, expounder of the Law of Nature, could only lay their observations upon both before the audience, submitting to their judgment, whether the reasonings thereupon were just: but it is too much trouble to go through with such an examination; the hearer comes only to hear, or perhaps to judge upon inspection, not to reflect or consider for himself; so the reasonings missing the sanction of his own judgment, cannot have their proper force. But

the style of Jesus ran otherwise, I and the Father are one, I speak not of myself, but from him that sent me, whoso keepeth my sayings, shall not taste of death. Here is no trouble needful to examine or reflect: the sound received through the ears will impress its ideas with sufficient force upon the mind.

There are many excellent sentiments of God and morality interspersed in the writings of the ancients: but those writings are studied by few, and read chiefly for curiosity and amusement, regarded as ingenious compositions, showing a sagacity and justness of thought in the authors. They may make some impression in the reading, which quickly dies away again upon laying the book aside; as Tully tells us was his case with respect to Plato upon the Immortality of the Soul. Whereas the Testament is the first book we are taught to read, to receive as the oracle of God, containing the way to Salvation, which at our utmost peril we must not disregard, and the truth whereof it is a sin to doubt: therefore whatever is drawn from thence comes accompanied with a reverence and idea of high importance, which give a force to the impression. Let a man take for his thesis the Stoical maxim, Things out of our power are nothing to us, and descant upon the imprudence of solicitude and anxiety for future events, which we can no ways prevent or provide against, it will not work the effects which the very same discourse might do, pronounced from the pulpit, upon the text, Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof, and interlarded with other texts of similar import.

Thus the Gospel operates to our benefit chiefly by its sacredness, and having the authority of a law established in heaven: which authority must depend upon our reverence of the Lawgiver. Wherefore it is that we are so continually exhorted to believe in the name of Jesus; that God hath given him a name above all other names, whether of things in heaven or upon earth below, or things under the earth: that there resided a Divinity within him, that his words were the words of God, and his acts the acts of God, in the performance whereof his human powers were only instrumental.

This I take to be the fundamental article of Christian Faith: if there are other articles whereof it is pronounced, This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly, it must be because they were necessary to protect and establish the principle; for if it were possible for any man fully and heartily to acknowledge the authority of the Gospel and of the Church, although through some misapprehension he should fall deficient with respect to the other particulars enumerated, I humbly apprehend that Athanasius himself would not anathematize him.

33. We are now come to the rock whereon Christ erected his Church, when he gave Simon the appellation of Peter; the stone which the builders refused, but is become the head stone of the corner: which we find to be the authority of a great name, supereminent above all other names, entitling the owner to say with truth and propriety, I and the Father are one. And this leads to the necessity of that greatest interposition of Omnipotence, the descent of the Son of God upon earth to take upon him our human Nature, or Union of the Deity with the Soul of a man, as herein before explained. For the authority of a name cannot be firmly established, so as to become the corner stone of a durable building, unless by a real character in the person assuming it.

We are bred up from our childhood in a reverence for Jesus, whom whenever we have occasion to speak of we call Christ, or our Saviour, and

should esteem it blasphemy in any one to drop a hint of his being a mere man, such as Socrates or Moses. But education only transmits opinions, which must have derived originally from some other source. I do not deny that the prophecies and miracles upon record opened an ample source of evidence to the first disciples: yet they could not have gained an unreserved credit to the words and example of one in whom any misapprehension or misbehaviour had been observed. And for such of our moderns as are willing to examine the principles instilled into them, the external evidence being unavoidably abated in its force by great distance of time and change of language, they are less likely to be satisfied without a character of wisdom running uniform throughout both in the Religion and the Instituter. For though Wisdom, in the sense I have used it all along, does not necessarily imply a complete knowledge of everything, yet it does imply an exact discernment of the knowledge it has, so as to distinguish unerringly what lies within its compass, and what does not: therefore we may trust unreservedly to the words and example of the perfect Wise man, because he will assert nothing but what he certainly knows to be true, and exhibit nothing as a pattern for imitation, whereof he does not clearly discern the expedience.

34. Therefore the Saviour of Mankind must possess the character of perfect Wisdom, consisting of a full power of endurance and forbearance; he must be a conqueror by a conquest greater than that of the World, the conquest of himself, a complete victory over all the allurements of sin, and terrors of death. Now this character, elsewhere imaginary, the object only of speculative admiration, became realized in Jesus. He was the Lamb without blemish, neither was there guile in his mouth: his bitterest enemies could find nothing to blame either in his words or actions, though they sought it diligently, and with all their artifices: and when bent upon his destruction, they could compass it no otherwise than by a false interpretation of his words. He had claimed to be the Son of God, Messiah the Conqueror, in the sense just now described: they resolved to understand it Conqueror of the World, particularly of the Romans; so they made him a rebel against Cæsar, dangerous to the government, one whom no friend of the Emperor could patiently suffer to live.

Yet this Lamb was to be sacrificed as a freewill offering by his own consent: he laid down his life, nor did any man take it from him; and during its continuance he joined temperance and fortitude to innocence. The forty days' recess in the wilderness, whether you take it as a narration of real facts, or figurative of imaginations suggested in his thoughts, shows him void of ambition, superior to the world with all its glories, and actuated solely by a principle of rectitude, or obedience to the Will of Heaven. He was meek and lowly, had not where to lay his head; when reviled, he answered not again; when scourged, buffeted, and spit upon, he endured the pain and the shame without repining; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter: that is, with the quietness, not the ignorance of a lamb, for he knew it was to be made by a barbarous execution.

Instances perhaps might be produced of people going through great self-denials and sufferings when under influence of some strong desire. Covetousness will make men starve themselves: ambition carry them through incessant toils and dangers: a quick sense of honour or shame will render them insensible of wounds, distresses, and even the terrors of death: revenge will work a total indifference to what becomes of themselves, so they can wreak their resentment upon another. But these are no proofs of a strength

in the Will to bear down opposition: it is carried forcibly by the impulse of one more powerful passion overcoming another powerful in a less degree: like a vessel driven by the force of a storm against the torrent of a rapid river. Therefore, such exploits display no features in the character of consummate Wisdom, which achieves its arduous works with a calm, deliberate resolutition, proceeding steadily against all obstacles upon one uniform plan, in contemplation of their rectitude, their necessary tendency to some important end, and in compliance with the Will of Heaven, which orders all things for the best.

35. But such invincible strength of the superior faculties is nowhere to be found in mortal man; for God in his first formation of human nature was pleased to give it an imbecility with which it could never gain an absolute dominion over appetite, aversion, and passion: it could only be raised thereto by an interposition of his almighty power joined in union with the manhood. Yet he had so ordered the course of second causes and constitution of human Nature, as that the union was needful to be made only with one man: for the benefits worked thereby would redound to the whole human race, whose Nature in his original constitution had been formed capable of being perfected by instruction, guidance, sympathy, and habit of right of action.

God is not profuse of his own Omnipotence: he employs it rarely, upon those occasions only wherein he had rendered it necessary by leaving deficiencies in his plan of Nature, purposely to admit these interpositions of his own hand, which he had predetermined from everlasting. Nor yet does he perform his extraordinary works wholly by his own power, but with the concurrence of second causes, turning and keeping them in the course wherein they will naturally bring forth the destined event.

Had this not been his method of proceeding, a mediation and intercession had been superfluous: for he might have changed our Nature from weakness to strength by an immediate operation upon us all. Neither would there have been need of an abiding union even with the one Man: it cannot be doubted that God, by a single exertion of his Omnipotence, the same wherewith he created all substance, could have remoulded him into a perfect creature, singular in its kind, as fancied by the Arians. But he was pleased to employ the natural force of habit for working the alteration, and used his own hand only to preserve that habit from a discontinuance by any single act of sin, which might have caused it to fail of its proper effect. So that without irreverence to our Saviour we may presume, that if the Deity had been withdrawn from his human soul just before entering upon the last trial, he would not have had strength to go through it, nor could have verified by his actions what he had expressed in words, Nevertheless, not my Will be done, but thine, O Father. Therefore it was necessary the union should be continued to the last, that he might be able to perfect and support the character of Wisdom or righteousness, needful for giving an authority and efficacy to the Religion he established, which was by slow degrees to introduce and complete the like character in the whole species.

36. Here we may recall to mind what has been observed in this chapter before, that the reformation proposed, at least in this world, was that of the species in general, not of every individual member; there running such a connection of interests and mutual intercourse among them, that an amendment worked in some, would one time or other spread among the rest: this life being a preparation for the next, and each man fitted therein for the station he will have to occupy, and the functions he will be wanted to perform in the community whereto he is going. Wherefore it may be neces-

sary, that many should die good Christians, though it be not necessary that all should partake here of the righteousness which is by Faith.

From hence let such as claim to be the elect, the chosen vessels, learn not to conceit themselves peculiar favourites upon that account: for their extraordinary gifts are bestowed for the public good, not for their own sakes; they are but vessels employed to hold the living waters, which are to be distributed among the whole society; the arteries for circulating the blood throughout all the members in the body of Christ. Let them not, like the sons of Zebedee, aspire to a high rank in heaven; but place their glory in being made instruments of blessedness kept in store for the human race. It is natural to wish themselves happy, but let them likewise wish sincerely, that if possible, every fellow creature might be as happy as themselves.

Hence likewise let the Rationalist learn which way to look for the stream of benefits flowing from the Gospel. Philosophy addresses the studious, the man grown, and the few: Religion the thoughtless, the child, and the many. One holds up light to direct the courses of thought: the other inspires the vigour of warmth to make men think. One applies to the head, which is the ruling power: the other to the heart, which is the executive.. The prerogative of Reason lies very low, perpetually overpowered by the rabble of appetites, passions, and opinions: it is in this part our constitution is disordered, and here it wants amendment. You can never expect to govern steadily without gaining an interest among the populace: and it is well known what influence a great name has upon them; for they readily distinguish one name from another, but they cannot distinguish measures, to see which are beneficial, which pernicious, and which wholly unavailing, good only in speculation.

It is a common shrewd observation, that if men would follow their own reason, they need not mind what parsons preach: this may be very true; and so it is, that if they would perform all their digestions properly, and keep their blood pure, they need not mind the Physician; but this is the very thing for which in a distempered habit the physician is wanted to assist them in doing. But the Rationalist can digest his ideas properly and keep his sentiments pure, nor finds any help in medicine. Be it so: yet his vanity will allow me to say, there are very few of such a happy temperature. Will he then forget that the object had in view was the improvement of mankind in general, that the Gospel was preached to the poor? Therefore it is said, that life and immortality were brought to light through the Gospel: not that they were never thought of before, but they were then brought to light when made visible to all by becoming a popular doctrine. Let him suppose Christianity banished from the world; I do not ask what he would lose himself, but what would the world in general be the better?

Nor yet need he be too secure against all damage to his own sweet person: for he ought to know the insinuative force of sympathy and intercourse with other people, whereby the soundest halest constitution may possibly catch an infection by conversing amongst very diseased company. Or if he pronounces this danger purely imaginary, still he may reflect on the benefit he has already received. Can he be sure of having made the same progress, had he been bred up amongst heathens and people of no Religion? Perhaps he might have spent his time in hunting after butterflies, or poking into every puddle for a polypus. The concern for futurity and great importance of right sentiment and behaviour which were the basis and first direction of his industry, were inculcated into him early by

those who had received them through the established channels. Nor is it unlikely, that even the absurdities and contradictions he was taught to esteem sacred in the nursery, may have put him upon that careful examination to which he owes all his present science.

So that the wisest of us have a personal interest in the general turn of thought prevailing around us: therefore as soon as he shall please to compose a form of rudiments better suited to the capacities of children and the vulgar, than those now current, and satisfy me of its excellence, I will consent to prefer it: provided that till then he will give me leave to use the Catechisms already put into my hands.

37. It remains to consider by what channels of operation the perfect righteousness, produced in one man by union with the Deity, works to the amendment of the human race; and the first of them has appeared to be, that of authority and name. But name and authority will not avail without something further, whereto they direct, some particular doctrines and practices they tend to introduce: and such we receive transmitted to us in the Sacred Writings. Which writings carry a derivative authority, as being the main channel connecting nearly with the fountain: like our New-river-head, so called, because it is the head from whence all the pipes are laid to supply our occasions, yet it is but a reservoir of waters derived from higher springs. For Jesus left nothing upon record himself, but instructed his apostles, and made them so fully acquainted with the Spirit of his institution, that they could not fail of distinguishing what was conformable thereto, from what was not; neither could they mistake in the grounds there were for the facts they related, or heard related; and it is the persuasion of this spirit constantly possessing them, that gains them the character of inspired writers. Therefore it is not material whether the first Gospel was penned eight, or eight and twenty years after the crucifixion, nor whether we have the original or only a translation: for the whole Canonical Scripture, in its present form, having been extant and current throughout the Church in the times of the Apostles, they must have corrected all errors and misrepresentations, if there had been any; wherefore it derives the full authority of its origin, and is received as the word of God.

This channel takes a different course from that worked out by human reason, because laid out upon different ground: therefore was counted foolishness by the Greeks, who had studied the head, but were unacquainted with the turnings of the human heart. Philosophy proceeds by an improvement of knowledge, by inquiries into the nature of things, from whence will appear what tenor of conduct is most conducive to happiness: therefore classes the virtues under the four Cardinals of Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, and Justice; expecting that when men are once convinced what measures are most prudential, their reason will urge them to pursue them. But it is well known that reason, and judgment, and prudence, however well informed, are feeble powers. Besides that application to the reason can only be made in persons who have attained a competent share of it by exercise and experience; but how will you deal with those who have no reason? Some principles are necessary to be instilled into the vulgar, and children, before they come to the use of reason, to bring them into it, and put them upon the exertion of their faculties. Therefore the Gospel makes a different distribution of Duty into the three theological virtues, of Faith, Hope, and Charity; and impresses an idea of obligation and a zeal, which may introduce them into persons who were not capable of discerning the prudence of them.

I have already given the best explanation I can of those virtues in the three Chapters bearing their titles, and need only add here, that Faith, the foundation of the other two, receives its strength among the generality from the authority of the Scriptures. Wherefore it is a wise provision of the civil government to protect them against attacks, nor is it an infringement of our natural liberty; for genuine liberty can never consist in anything which tends to the disorder and hurt of the community. Calm argumentation upon the construction of them and liberty of conscience are justly permitted; but open depreciatings and ridicule can do no good, for they operate only upon the passions, therefore cannot improve the understanding, and tend solely to bring back that unconcernedness for the future, and indifference either to right or wrong, which is the great disorder of human nature.

38. Religion, being calculated for the lower part of our human composition, to introduce a law of the mind into such as had none of their own, to discipline Imagination, that it may fall into proper trains, therefore proceeds by methods best adapted to work upon that faculty, that is, by assertion, injunction, form, and institution, rather than dissertation or argument. So that it is an idle question of those who ask, What shall I learn by going to church? for the principal use of going is not so much to learn, as to impress a thorough persuasion of what they had learned before, to stir up an industry and appetite for profitable exercises of their understanding at home; to bring their spontaneous judgments and common apprehensions to run in conformity with their deliberate, and discipline their executive powers, the appetites and habits, to follow steadily the directions of the rational that so there may be no wavering in their sentiments or conduct, no alternate seasons of discretion and thoughtlessness.

But as I have observed above, that the Scriptures carry a derivative authority, so that of the forms and institutions practised among us comes by a more remote derivation. I do not remember many of them enjoined expressly in the Gospel: there are two Sacraments, and one very short form of prayer; but the particular manner used in performing them, and the observation of Sundays, which seems to come next in sacredness, were no articles in the Code. In these things we copy the usages of the Apostles and primitive Christians, who must be acknowledged to know the mind of their Master; and therefore whatever has the sanction of their example, has the authority of an institution given by him; except in cases where it is visible they modelled their behaviour with a regard to the time and country wherein they lived. For some of their customs, as the love feasts, the community of goods, the ministration of tables by seven deacons, the abstinence from blood, have been long since disused.

The like regard to times and countries and incidents happening, has created a necessity of compiling several Creeds, and making alterations in our modes of worship, and rules of Church discipline. All which the plain man must take upon the authority of the particular Church whereof Providence has cast his lot to be a member, by causing him to be born and bred in it, or by some natural means working his conversion into it; and the intelligent, too, owes a deference to the same authority for order and expedience sake, as knowing that authority is the main spring employed in the Christian dispensation for the amendment of human nature.

Nevertheless, these regulations being the product of man's judgment, must be liable, and are known in fact to differ much from one another; yet

this need not break the unity of the Church, nor abate our Christian charity for all the several branches of it whereon we do not grow ourselves, as the hand varying in shape from the feet, and the knee lying remote from the forehead, does not destroy the unity of the human body, for the whole composition is called an Individual, because actuated in all its members by one and the same Spirit. In like manner, Christians of all denominations, if they mean not to be of Paul, or of Apollos, but of Christ, that is, not to place their Salvation in forms and ceremonies and speculative points of belief, but honestly to search out the design aimed at, and methods of attaining it pursued throughout the Gospel, will find themselves actuated by the same spirit of a steady, unboisterous zeal for advancing daily in the three theological virtues, as being the sole and certain way of coming to the Father.

39. We have observed in a former place, that as in heathen ethics Wisdom stands for that consummate character possessing all the virtues, so in Christian language, Faith is often employed to express that full degree of perfection attainable in this world. Nevertheless, when we consider Faith distinctly in its primary signification, we shall not find it to be the saving principle: it gives us an entrance upon our journey, but it is by Hope and Charity that we come to the Father; wherefore love to God and to our neighbour are declared to be the fulfilling of the Law, that is, all the Laws, of Moses, of Nature, and of the Gospel. The love of God, as I have endeavoured to show in the chapter on Charity, is not a love of affection, or desire of procuring profit or pleasure to its object, for that we are incapable of ever effecting, but a filial love of dependence and resting our expectations upon his providence, his wisdom, his mercy, and goodness; and this may well be styled Hope.

The glowing Hope of the Apostles and primitive Christians which made them long for their dissolution that they might be with Christ, was necessary to support them under the cruel distresses and persecutions whereto they were perpetually liable; but to us, whom God has blessed with a more peaceable situation, such an eagerness might be mischievous, as it might beget an impatience which would draw us off from all proper attention to the duties of our station. The love of life is implanted in us for our preservation, it is unnatural to loath it, and those who would press such a disposition of mind as a duty upon their followers, only teach them to dissemble with themselves; or if the profession be real, it must have become so by their being driven into such austerities and labours of devotion, such a tastelessness of all innocent enjoyments, such a contempt and aversion for their fellow-creatures in the world around them, as has made their lives a burden to them.

Yet we all know, that our lives will not last always, and it is no small benefit to have a comfortable prospect beyond. Our Religion has taught us that this life is preparatory to the next, that all evils befalling in it, otherwise than through our own wilful misconduct, will terminate in our greater good, and that God has graciously furnished us with means of making it the preparation for a happy state. Here then is a fit object for calm and soothing hope to fasten upon, which may become one of the main springs to actuate our motions: we may rejoice in the lawful pleasures afforded us, as being an earnest of that Bounty from whence we expect greater joys, we may feel a sensible satisfaction in every right performance of our religious duties, and even of our little offices in common life, which advance us continually onward in the way we wish.

And when we consider, there is one common Father of all, who is no respecter of persons, but good and gracious, equal to all; who has connected the interest of his children so that the whole body of Christ must be perfected before any individual member can become completely happy, our Hope will grow into universal Charity. If we fancy ourselves possessed of any extraordinary talents or gifts, we shall regard them as deposits entrusted in our hands, to be improved for the benefit of the community, from whose advantage alone we can expect to reap any ourselves; so that in labouring the Salvation of others, we labour for our own, and every little good or pleasure done to our neighbour will in consequence redound to the doer. Such apprehensions must keep us in perfect charity with all men, not only with the household of Faith, but all others too, without exception even of aliens, worldly-minded, sensual slanderers, enemies, and persecutors.

Without a competent mixture of these virtues, Faith is an unavailing form, a mere dead carcass, like the dust of the ground, when God first formed it into a human body; but they are the breath of life, which, being breathed thereinto, make it become a living soul, and manifest its vigour by continual efforts to push forth more fruit of good works than these sublunary climes can ripen.

40. Nevertheless, Faith, being the foundation whereon to build unto edification, demands the first cares of the builder to work it strong. If there were a solid bottom of rational conviction, this would be the best ground to lay the foundation upon; but this not being to be had among the generality, it must rest upon the authority of churches, and creeds, and canons, and customs; like the houses of Amsterdam, which are reported to stand upon piles driven deep into the quagmire. And perhaps the most intelligent may not produce so firm a soil unyielding to pressure, as to render the expedient of piles needless for giving it a greater consistency, that the building above may never sink, nor slide, nor totter.

But the corner-stone is not the whole of a foundation: though Faith in Christ be the corner-stone, he has enjoined us further in John xiv. to keep his saying, as the distinguishing mark of a disciple, or one that loveth him. So then barely believing that Jesus is Christ, the Redeemer, or even believing his sayings to be true, will not suffice without keeping them in mind, and heartily embracing all the articles of faith contained in them, which go to complete the foundation. It is for infixing this foundation firmly in all its parts, that our divine services, assemblies, forms, and places of worship, ceremonies, and other religious institutions have been provided, and times appointed for the repetition of them. For Faith is a species of persuasion, and we know persuasions are strengthened by forms and customs, concurrence of numbers, external appearances, and frequently repeating the same thing to the ear. Wherefore it is a wrong notion of some people, that the resort to places of devotion is only to learn, and if they do not like the preacher they might as well stay away: if they should learn something there, as it is to be hoped they often may, so much the better; but the practical benefit is done by helping them to keep the sayings they had learned aforetime. Then for the business of learning, I believe many have found experience of greater profit from texts aptly interwoven into a discourse, than they could have made by reading over a chapter in their Bible: for there, as in all other collections of proverbs, apophthegms, and dark sayings, the matters lie so thick, that they crowd into confusion in the thoughts, entangle perpetually with one another unless drawn out into sepa-

rate threads, which the eye can run easily along, until it reaches one particular point.

From this view of the sacred offices may be drawn two corollaries. One, that they carry no intrinsic value nor sanctity in themselves, but are valuable only for the preservation and increase of faith they tend to produce; neither is a man the more religious or acceptable in the sight of God merely for his assiduities or fervours in them, but for the proficiency he makes by their aid in strengthening his faith, and completing it by addition of the two other virtues. The other conclusion is that their rectitude and propriety may be tried by observation of the effects they work upon the practisers. If chanting and organs are found to infuse a notion into the populace that God Almighty is delighted or put into better humour with music, they ought certainly to be torn from our services, as a rag of Popery; but if no such fancy is entertained by those who use them, who do it only because finding their minds lifted to a greater heartiness in their devotions when accompanied therewith, why should they be pronounced superstitious, while contributing to answer the main end of divine services, that of working upon the heart? It is as much superstition to imagine that God will not receive our thanksgivings when offered in an harmonious sound, as that he will not receive them without. For he looks into the secret recesses of the heart, and tries the reins, nor is moved this way or that by any undulations of air, whether finely or coarsely modulated. But it is too common for people to judge of others by themselves: if they have been inured from their childhood to dull forms of devotion and rude screamings, they think everything shocking which is shocking to their ears, nor considering that they bring with them that cast of mind, which vitiates the performance. Like persons who, having contracted a nausea for the dishes of foreign countries by being long accustomed to others of a contrary savour, will pronounce a meat unwholesome, because it sets their stomachs a kecking.

However, since the same causes operate differently upon different subjects, tastes are known to alter, therefore forms and ceremonies must be altered too, to accommodate them to the changes prevailing among a people, for preserving their efficacy to answer the purpose intended by them. We may learn from history, there were some which have been actually changed: the love feasts, the trine immersion, exorcism of the devil before baptism, practised in the primitive times, are now become obsolete; because they would be improper among us, and more likely to prove obstructions to our Faith, than means of confirming it.

Yet are such changes to be made sparingly and cautiously, as being always attended with some inconvenience or hazard: for we must remember, that forms derive their weight from their authority, which is mightily strengthened by long usage. Although no human institutions are like the laws of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be broken, there requires great judgment and discretion to see when the mischiefs of adhering to them are greater than the inconveniences of breaking through them, and great management to gain a new custom equal credit with the old ones. When needful, it had better be introduced gently and gradually; for all sudden revolutions, whether in Church or State, leave a party subsisting to struggle for the restoration of what has been abolished.

41. The Gospel, we have seen, proceeds altogether by way of authority and injunction, not of reason; by drawing the affections into a holy turn, not by directing the understanding how to strike out new discoveries in

science. From whence some have unwarily concluded, that it and human reason are mortal enemies, so that every free exercise of the latter is a departure from the faith, the mark of a dangerous character not to be consorted with. It is true, the loudest pretenders to Reason, who take her name in vain, are dangerous persons, for they deal wholly in cavil, objection, and unsettling the minds of men; but genuine Reason teaches her votaries to build up rather than pull down, to gather lights for the dispersion of darkness and confusion, to aim at some improvement of the mind, nor ever to overthrow, unless when some obstacle stands directly in the way of her salutary plans. Wherefore it does not follow, that because Religion and Reason do not always use each other's assistance (for I hope to show they frequently do), they must act in opposition: for they have their distinct provinces, make application to different persons, and aim at different purposes not inconsistent with one another.

The Gospel was preached to the poor or the populace, calculated upon their level; it pursues solely and steadily one point, the advancement of Faith, understood in the most comprehensive sense, as including the two associate virtues; it meddles not with the three branches of Philosophy, Nature, Logic, and Ethics, any further than while relative to its own design; nor interferes in matters of speculation either to recommend or condemn them, but leaves all these things to those natural lights, which God and Providence have distributed among mankind.

There is a remarkable instance of this in the case of the man born blind, who was miraculously brought to his sight. The commentators agree, that the doctrine of pre-existence prevailed much among the Jews, especially the Pharisees, and that the question, Was this man born blind for his own sin or the sin of his parents? was put in order to draw a decision from Jesus upon that point. Now we cannot suppose otherwise than that he, who came to banish all unrighteousness from the thoughts of men, would have declared expressly against that side of the question which had been sinful. Therefore from his evading a direct answer, we must undoubtedly conclude, that either opinion was a harmless but unprofitable opinion, having no immediate connection with the purpose of his mission; and that a man is not a whit the better Christian for believing or disbelieving a pre-existent state, but is left at full liberty to judge of it according as his own reason shall direct him.

The same may be said of other speculations whereon the Scriptures are really silent, and acknowledged so to be by men of the soundest judgment, although they seem to overthrow them by speaking in conformity with the language and ideas of the vulgar. The rotundity of the Earth, its diurnal and annual rotation, the Copernican system, the gravitation of all bodies even air and flame, still maintain their ground among the orthodox and religious, notwithstanding texts have been cited in times of superstition and blind zeal, to prove them impious and heretical.

And there are other speculations supposed to be proved from Scripture with as little ground as the former were supposed to be overthrown: such as the identity of the body in substance, shape, and size at the Resurrection, the winged bodies of angels, the subterraneous place of hell, the restoration of Paradise, the thousand years kingdom of Christ upon earth, and the like. These things, while entertained as speculations, are innocent, and may be useful, but ought by no means to be contended for as articles of Faith; nor is anything to be received upon the authority of the Gospel, unless what is necessary to secure the purity of our sentiments and man-

ners, the sole design for which it was promulgated. Whatever else we find there, is to be esteemed figurative or hypothetical, partially useful, adapted to some casts of imagination for helping their progress towards more important points. Thus the speculations last mentioned may bring many persons more readily to conceive the survival of their own persons after death, the existence of other creatures besides the superior to the human, the dismal consequences of wickedness, the restoration of mankind to the happiness from whence they are fallen, and that there are gradations of glory, or more stages of Being than one, to succeed after the present: whereas, to other persons perhaps they might prove misleadings, stumbling-blocks, and sources of endless dispute. Wherefore Figure, Parable, Hypothesis, whether of sacred writ or human invention, merit attention so far only as found profitable for edification, while they serve as scaffolds in raising the building of righteousness in opinion and conduct. I have already desired my hypothesis in the first Volume might be treated in this manner. If any man finds them open his imagination to a clearer conception of things invisible, enlarge his idea of the divine Glory, strengthen his hope, and illustrate the influence of his present conduct in thought, word, and deed, upon his future interests, they can do him no hurt: but if he sees them tending to produce contrary effects, let him pronounce them strange, odd, and whimsical; he may easily overthrow them at a stroke with those two invinciple arguments, a laugh and an exclamation.

42. Such being the case with all systems both sacred and profane, which contain matters of universal importance, that they mingle speculations therewith of less general use, serviceable only for gaining a readier reception of the former, it requires judgment and consideration to distinguish the one from the other. Whence it appears that Religion and Reason are so far from being belligerent powers, acting in continual opposition, that they join in alliance, and give mutual assistance to each other. For the characteristic of a truth to be depended upon is its agreeableness to both: so that both unite in securing us against dangerous errors. When the workings of imagination have led us into some conclusion consistent with the main design of the Gospel, we may be sure there has been some fallacy in the course of our reasonings, which it behoves us to revise until we can discover wherein they have been faulty: and when the Scriptures seem to teach a doctrine contrary to reason, we have certainly misinterpreted them, and ought to seek out for a more rational construction.

Many passages, not figurative nor hyperbolical, cannot be understood without careful exercise of our sagacity and judgment. What will you make of the text, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven? I know not what the expression might signify among the Jews, but with us poorness is the same as lowness of spirits, which lies liable to melancholy and despondency, and is the soil least productive of Hope, one of the three Christian virtues, principally conductive to heaven, as anticipating the joys of it. Or if you understand it poor in the graces of the Holy Ghost, surely this can never be deemed a qualification for the blessedness annexed: therefore you must hold up the light of reason, and consider the nature of man, and the nature of things, before you can discern the true sense of the expression.

Nor is the want of reason's aid always accidental, occasioned by change of language and customs: the Scriptures often vary their own language, and involve matters of different kinds together in the same discourse. If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above. The Resur-

rection of Christ was a literal one: that of the Corinthians, who were still alive, could only be metaphorical: but by ceasing to be Jews or Gentiles they had died to sin and superstition; by becoming Christians they were risen to a life of holiness, to a new set of hopes and desires, different from those which had given life to their actions before; and they were risen with Christ, because the belief of his Resurrection had been the means to work their conversion.

The twenty-fourth Chapter of St. Matthew, together with those of similar purport in the other Evangelists, are acknowledged to treat promiscuously of the destruction of Jerusalem, and end of the world: so that it is not easy to see to which of those great events every particular passage relates, nor possible to ascertain, without considering the nature of the things spoken of. That expression of the stars falling from heaven will be differently understood according to our astronomical theory of their being only meteors hanging in the air, or vast bodies, much greater than this Earth, stationed at an immense distance. And that of the Son of Man coming in the clouds and gathering his elect from the four quarters of the earth, will receive various interpretations according to the degree of grossness or refinement in our ideas. Besides that, perhaps this passage may not relate to the day of judgment at all, because the gathering is in the next Chapter and other places extended to all nations, including the reprobate as well as the elect.

The Jewish and Christian dispensations are distinguished by the age or world that now is, and that which is to come, by earth and heaven: so that the first act of faith in the Messiah gives immediate entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Salvation denotes sometimes admittance into the Church, as by Baptism; sometimes being upon the right road by faith; sometimes the habitual possession of that righteousness which is by faith; and sometimes a future state of happiness. Son of God is an appellation often given to men: we know not who those sons of God in the Old Testament were, who went in unto the daughters of men and begat giants; but in the New Testament the faithful are promised to be made the Sons of God. St. Luke proves Jesus to be so by deducing his genealogy from Adam, which was the Son of God. It is sometimes synonymous with the Messiah, appropriated to Jesus on account of his conception by the Holy Ghost, or of his union with the Deity, and sometimes applied to God himself, when acting in his second person. Spirit has a multitude of significations: it is the perceptive substance within a man; it is the rational and cogitative faculties, it is vigour of holiness actuating the motions: it is the true sense and design of a figure or institution, in contradistinction to the dead letter or carnal ordinance; it is the wind; for the next translated, Who maketh his Angels Spirits, might as well be rendered, Who maketh the winds his angels or messengers; and many learned men hold that the Angel who destroyed the host of Sennacherib, was a suffocating wind which God sometimes sends to make great havoc in hot countries; it is the grace of God shed upon our hearts enabling us to do good works, or not unfrequently, the Holy Ghost operating to infuse that grace.

There are many other Scripture terms, as well as those of common language, which change their signification according to the stations they occupy: therefore it is a fallacious way of arguing to string a number of texts of similar sound, for it is likely they may contain very dissimilar substance. Common sense and constant use will direct us how to understand our words in ordinary discourse: but the constant usage of persons, among whom we

converse, will often mislead and perplex us with respect to the language of holy writ: all the variations there cannot be discerned, nor respectively assigned to their proper places without diligent exercise of our judgment.

Texts, you say, ought to be explained by one another: this I grant the best method where it can be had; yet even here the rational faculties and rules of argumentation, practised among mankind, are helpful, if not necessary, to make the explanation rightly. But when there is a fluctuation of language, or the same figure pursued throughout in many passages, how shall you come at the true sense, or the thing signified, without the consideration of human Nature, and those conceptions of right and wrong, and of the Supreme Being, which most men agree in? or if you can find a rational construction, why should it not be esteemed the true one?

I have endeavoured in the foregoing Sections to give a specimen of what human reason may do in alliance with the Gospel: with what success must be left to others to judge, but I hope with no mischievous consequence. It has been my aim to show, that several terms of sacred use are figurative, and what they are figurative of, in order to draw the believer from travelling in a kind of fairy land, where all is unnatural, mysterious, and confused; and to rescue our Holy Religion from that appearance of inconsistency, darkness, and contrariety to reason, which has made it a stumbling-block to the considerate, and a laughing-stock to the scoffer.

43. Nor does our Religion only admit the alliance of human Reason to protect and defend it against the encroachments of superstition and absurdity, but appears purposely calculated to exercise and excite it. The law was a compilation of forms and ceremonies to be observed respectively in their appointed manners and times: so the Israelite had nothing more to do than open his Pentateuch and he might see there, what was his duty upon every particular occasion; nothing being left to his discretion, there was no call for his judgment to bestir itself at all. But the parabolical and enigmatic style of the Gospel will not suffer our judgment to lie idle a moment: it rouses us by terrors and the prospect of a glorious reward, to a desire of persevering in the right way; but when we turn over the pages for the steps to be taken, we are often presented with a dead letter; the spirit must be fetched forth by application and industry, and mature digestion. To the running reader some precepts are impossible, Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect; some unnatural, Turn the right cheek to him that has smitten you on the left; others contradictory, Take no thought of to-morrow, Lay up treasures for yourselves in heaven; others impracticable, Sell all thou hast and give to the poor; for if all were to sell there could be no buyers.

Such difficulties will occur in all treatises on morality and religion, and I believe in none more than in the Gospel; nor perhaps is there any from which a superficial reader is less likely to learn, or, which is worse, more likely to learn what is not true. It abounds in riddles, as I have observed before; and a riddle is not designed to supersede, but to whet our sagacity, and urge us to an exertion of our natural faculties. The solution whereof, when attempted by comparing text with text, requires the painful exercise of our understanding, and that sobriety of judgment wherein the perfection of our reasoning faculty consists. But this method of proceeding by comparison will not always answer the purpose: everybody knows what various and discordant systems have been stricken out among Christians, they all claim to stand upon the authority of Scripture; strings of texts are drawn in plenty, and you are exhorted to compare them with one another. How

then can you better determine among them, than by collation with that other word of God, which is written in his works, and taking that for the true interpretation of the texts which appears the most rational and consistent throughout with your experience of human and external Nature? Nor need you want authority for such procedure, derived from John vii. 17; for if you were sincerely willing before to do the Will of God upon the best information to be gotten from other quarters, you shall know of the doctrine whether it come from the same Author.

The Papist perpetually hits you in the teeth with, This is my body: you cannot confront him with opposite texts, for they all, where speaking relatively to this matter, concur in requiring you to eat the flesh and drink the blood, in declaring that the flesh is meat indeed and the blood is drink indeed, that the bread which came down from heaven can alone keep you from starving with hunger and thirst. But being willing to do the Will of God as manifested clearly by the natural lights he has given you, you know of the doctrine that it is not from him; for his word can never be understood in a sense which shall make it abhorrent to reason. So the Papist is refuted by showing the repugnancy of his doctrine to all our natural lights, the absurd consequence of transubstantiation necessarily flowing from it, the contradiction of a body existing in a thousand places at once, and by our knowledge of human Nature making it evident, that a particular diet of the body cannot work an amendment of the mind, which was the sole design of the Gospel.

That passage, Verily I say unto You, that this generation shall not pass until all these things be done, was generally understood among the primitive Christians as relating to the second coming of Christ; therefore they expected it year after year, and St. Paul expresses himself, We who are alive shall be caught up in the clouds together with the resurgents. And it is not by comparison with other passages, but by our knowledge of events, that we now unanimously refer that declaration to the destruction of Jerusalem.

The Scripture gives general rules which cannot be particularized for practice without a knowledge drawn from other funds: therefore are to be regarded as Theses for putting the mind into profitable trains of meditation and inquiry. It proposes subjects to our consideration, but often leaves it to ourselves what lights we shall strike out, what deductions we shall draw therefrom. It restrains what St. Paul calls the vain babblings of Philosophy, but encourages Philosophy when she can talk pertinently for illustrating or enforcing the matters it suggests to her contemplation. Accordingly we may observe, that Philosophy runs in a sounder, steadier, more wholesome channel in the Christian world than it used to do in ancient times, and the human sciences have been made serviceable to advance the purposes of the Gospel. Astronomy displays the magnificence, the glory, the power of our Creator: Metaphysics help us to understand the spiritual essence of our souls, the dominion of Providence over free agents, the independence of the soul upon a corporeal frame for its existence: the study of Man leads to the right understanding, and manifests the expedience of the doctrines and precepts delivered in Holy Writ: the study of Nature discovers the inertness of matter, thereby proving that fundamental article, the Being of a God; and displays his stupendous Wisdom conspicuous in the wonderful variety and regularity of our courses: and I flatter myself some imperfect sketches may be found in the foregoing work, whereby it is

shown that the investigations of human reason are applicable to the services of Religion.

Christ has declared that he came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil; by which we cannot understand the ceremonial law, for that he did abolish, but the moral, the same wherein St. Paul tells us the Gentiles were a law unto themselves; for God left not himself without a witness, having displayed his eternal Power and Godhead in the works of the Creation; whereof Man was not the work of least importance to be known by Man. The words of Christ himself do not always profit without a knowledge of human Nature: he has said the Sabbath was made for Man, not Man for the Sabbath, but he has not directed in what particular manner Man should make his uses of it. Therefore we must presume it was upon observation on the wants of mankind requiring some rule to guide their discretion in the disposal of their time, that the first disciples appropriated a certain day in the week for religious exercises, and abstinence from all secular employments.

44. Nevertheless, it must be owned, that Religion and Reason too often do hurt to one another, when like other allies they consult their separate interests preferably to the general; not considering that the strength of a confederacy lies in unanimity, fidelity, mutual confidence, and steady attachment to the common cause. Now the common cause of both I apprehend to be the amendment of human Nature, which the one endeavours to effect by showing men what makes for their good, the other by stirring up a zeal to pursue it. But knowledge without zeal is a lifeless carcass, it has eyes to stare with, but no hands to execute; and zeal without knowledge is a wild colt, that keeps galloping about, but makes no way upon the road. When ceasing to act in alliance, the fondness for knowledge damps the ardour of zeal, and zeal hurries on with an impetuosity incapable of looking about: therefore their partizans, being sensible of this, entertain a continual jealousy of one another.

The Rationalist suspects every exhortation to read the Gospel as a design to ensnare him, to debar him the use of thought, to keep him in ignorance, that he may be ductile and governable, and looks upon every serious countenance as a mark of folly and weakness: his vanity makes him forward to show his opinion of others, thereby obstructing the progress of reason, by setting people against it. The zealot suspects every man who presumes to doubt, to examine, to argue, of being a concealed infidel, a secret underminer of things sacred, he abhors the like practices himself, and scorns all explanation or human reasoning; thereby betraying his Religion by running into gross extravagancies and palpable absurdities, which give an easy victory to the adversary.

They are so averse they will not suffer the same language to be spoken among them: you cannot mention the words Righteousness or Sanctity in one company without being thought a canting creature, that loves to talk without a meaning: nor Rectitude or Virtue in another, but you are presently judged a Free-thinker. Now I would fain know, where is the difference between the Sanctity of manners ascribed to Marcia in Addison's Cato, and that character which Solomon expresses by a virtuous woman; or between Rectitude and Righteousness, when thoroughly understood. But this both parties seem resolved not to do; so Rectitude remains appropriated to one mistaken notion, and Righteousness to another. Methinks it would be worth while for each to penetrate into the other's ideas, and

learn his language, were it only for the sake of making converts: for how can you refute a man unless you understand him? because else you can never know wherein the error lies that you would convince him of.

And herein I think the Rationalist more blameable than the Devotee, because being generally a man of more learning and thought, he is better master of language, and better able to vest his ideas in any clothing; and he cannot forget the advantage of appearing in a dress agreeable to the company. I must not exhort him to become all things to all men, if by any means he may gain some; because that being an expression of Parson Paul, he would suspect me of priestcraft; but he must see, from the nature of the thing, that if he can contrive to deliver his own thoughts in Scripture terms, he will be heard with better attention and better profit. Words are but sounds that will take any meaning affixed to them; and styles are only tunes whereto very different odes may be set. I have shown him just now that I can conform myself to the jocular style of the Free-thinker, yet be serious all the while. Why then should he be affrighted at the letters G, R, A, C, E? they are harmless, inoffensive characters, susceptible either of a solid, or superstitious meaning. If then he can affix a rational sense to the term, he will be better able to lead the wanderer by gentle windings into a justness of thought, than by using a language unfamiliar to his ear.

45. The method of rational explanation is preferable to that of opposition, yet is that method to be pursued with caution, so far only as the subjects can bear it; for there are some tempers in whom familiarity breeds contempt: they cannot follow the long deduction of consequences by which measures are shown to be expedient, but the line must be shortened for them, and they must be prevailed upon to take the measures by authority and reverence. But obscurity and mystery often add a sacredness to things: therefore I do not know whether the illustrations hereinbefore attempted of several important Scripture doctrines may be serviceable to everybody. It has been remarked already, that if all men would live up invariably to the decisions of their judgment, we should have a happy world; but then it must be their own judgment, such as they are capable of framing: this then is the principal point to be driven at, and new lights to be thrown in only as we find them in a disposition to follow them.

Therefore it will be best to leave men to their own notions of Atonement, Satisfaction, Intercession, and the like, while they see no inconsistences there, and are not led thereby into imaginations destructive of their own peace of mind, or detrimental to the society they live in; and to stand upon the watch in readiness to clear up any difficulties that may perplex them, or check any deviations that might turn them into pernicious trains of sentiment or conduct.

For the same form of doctrine will not suit every age and country, nor every class of men in the same country alike. In times of ignorance and inconsiderate activity, a mixture of what would be superstition to us is necessary: for I have said in a former place that superstition is relative, the grossest ideas being not such to him who is capable of entertaining no better. The least sense of Religion cannot be maintained without a persuasion of the divine dominion continually over us: this the man of contemplation discerns in the course of Nature, for he knows that her works are the works of God, who gave her powers and planned her operations with exact knowledge of every minutest event they should produce, so he sees God continually before him in the productions of second causes. But the plain man cannot comprehend this; therefore we must permit him to

imagine frequent interpositions in the growth of corn, the changes of weather, the actions of mankind, or he will think himself abandoned to the necessary agency of matter and motion, or the caprices of chance.

46. Therefore it would become the Rationalist, who complains so loudly of the headiness and hastiness of zeal, to beware of falling into the like error himself, and not be too hasty in eradicating the evil weed of superstition, before he has examined whether the roots of corn be not so intermatted with it, that he shall pluck up both together. But perhaps it is not an evil weed in the soil where it grows; it may be not superstition, but a compendious method of apprehending that which a narrow imagination cannot contain at large, a joining the act of God with the productions of Nature or Fortune, when the eye is not strong enough to run along the line of second causes, between a figurative representation by sensible images things that cannot be comprehended in the abstract.

And let him keep an eye upon another plant which sometimes proves a noxious weed, and that is the habit of jesting and ridicule: for if a sacred dread makes one heady, a fondness for wit makes one giddy. Both are serviceable in a certain degree, but mischievous when redundant, when not managed with discretion and confined to their proper places; for it is not uncommon that the same plants deserve cultivation in one place, but require weeding out from another. We sow fields of oats with care and cost, but are very sorry to see them among our wheat: the scarlet poppy, and sun-resembling marigold, which burn up our corn, are esteemed ornaments in our gardens: the carpet-woven grass that beautifies our lawns must be extirpated from our fallows by frequent and toilsome ploughings.

But superstition is not always a distinct plant, it is sometimes like the green leaves of corn, which protect and assist to draw up nourishment into the spire, and will wither away of themselves as that grows towards maturity. Therefore a mixture of it, more than we should think needful for our own use, is profitable to young persons, as it serves to restrain the sallies of youth, establishes salutary persuasions, before they can discern solid grounds to build them upon, and will give way and fall off in proportion as reason expands; nay, it helps in the mean while to render her vessels more compact, and atrengthen their tone by a little pressure, requiring their continual exertion to overcome it.

The like may be said with respect to young nations which commonly begin in ignorance, rudeness, barbarism, and total disregard to all virtues not bearing a visible reference to military merit. Therefore the ancient legislators and founders of states have always dealt much in mystery and sacred rite. And the primitive Fathers, in the earliest ages of Christianity, as I have been informed by citations from their remains, for I have no personal acquaintance among them, practised exorcisms, unctions, signatures of the cross, and lustrations by holy water. Perhaps the inventions of Popery, before it was strained up to an absolute dominion over persons, goods, and thoughts, might be needful to spread and enforce Religion, and give air for the seeds of Reason to bud forth. Were the times of our Saxon ancestors renewed upon this land, how glad should we peaceable folks be to have an asylum in some monastery, under protection of Saint Mary, or Saint Peter, or even of Saint Almanachius, provided he had the reputation of working miracles, and setting the Devil upon all who should presume to invade his sanctuary, where we might give full play to our rational faculties in quiet, without perpetual hazard of murder or rapine, or the terrors and ravages of war. Even the mumbling over Paternosters and Ave

Mary's was some submission to discipline and lifting the thought to things above, which though little enough, still was better than none: nor could the observation, that the greatest droppers of beads were often the worst men, fail to put some persons upon reflection, and inquiring wherein the real essence of Religion consisted, which might open the passage for a little glimpse of the true design in the coming of Christ.

But now, God be thanked, the world is more enlightened, so that we want not so much of the fiery meteor, enwrapt in clouds and darkness. The Reformation has opened a way for the advancement of useful science, and the exercise of sober, unlicentious freedom of thought; whereby the minds of men have been widened to take a larger prospect and observe the symmetry and connection prevailing among the several parts of it made more attentive to rational explanation, and capable of receiving it; so that we can now trace the hand of God through the channel of his providence from remote distances, without the necessity of imagining it constantly close to us. Nevertheless, at all times and in all communities, there will be minds of very various sizes, some contracted by their natural debility, and others by the necessary attention to their professions or situations in life: therefore mystery and unexplained obligation cannot be totally discarded. Pythagoras had his Tetrachty, his mystic numbers, his symbols. Socrates his Demon, and Tully his system of auguries: which, though rational doctrines in their own minds, yet, as understood by vulgar apprehensions, we should esteem highly superstitious.

·47. Nor can we still avoid all ambiguity and equivocal language, which exhibits a very different scene of thought to different imaginations. All sciences and professions have their technical terms, their several rules of proceeding and modes of instruction, unintelligible except to the practiser. law, physic, mathematics, even commerce, manufacture, and the mechanic arts, are not without their mysteries; nor does politics abound in them the least of any. In popular assemblies the orator does not always give you the true reasons for the measure he would persuade you to follow, he prefers such as he judges most likely to prevail, and herein he acts honestly, provided the ultimate end of his aim be honest, for in this case the end crowns the work. If indeed he would bring you to his own point for serving his private interests under specious pretences of the public good, I have nothing to say in his justification; but if his point be salutary, it is laudable to employ the most effectual means of attaining it, although they should be very different from those which had prevailed upon himself to desire it.

In like manner it behoves the discourser upon religious matters to consider the importance of his principal point in view, and then to conduct those to whom he addresses along such tracks in their imagination as he shall find practicable, taking good caution that in his necessary deviations from the solid road of reason he does not tear up the ground of any cross paths whereby they might be debarred access to some other point equally important: for Tully advises to be guarded on all quarters, and attentive to do the cause no detriment through eagerness to serve it.

But there are many subordinate points tending in order successively to one another, and it is of importance to distinguish the intermediate from the ultimate: which to do requires a piercing eye to reach through the whole line, and an extensive judgment to take in the plan of all their connections. There is a multitude of labourers in the vineyard, as well volunteers in dissertations and essays, as retained servants entered upon the steward's roll: and it cannot be expected they should all have an equal quickness of optics or compass of

understanding; nor is it needful. For a very few merchants suffice to import the heavenly wares from the countries producing them, the Scriptures and the fields of Nature: it is the retailer and petty shop-keeper, dispersed everywhere, that must supply the demands of the public. Importation is not their business, but to resort to the warehouse, and retail out the goods as received from thence: only taking care to inquire the general character of the merchant they deal with, for some have been known to put false marks upon their bales, being imposed upon by mixtures of things manufactured in the regions of ambition, avarice, contention, vanity, and self-conceit. The misfortune is that we cannot easily know the size of our talents; we are apt to fancy ourselves merchants when by no means qualified for foreign correspondence: like the little Frenchman, squeezed up in a shop of twelve feet by six, who calls himself merchant of snuff, merchant of soap, and candles, and card-matches. Our London company of tailors have a better title to the dignity of merchant by their magnificent hall, capacious to hold all the lords governors of India in general synod assembled.

Yet I do not wish any one to follow implicitly his rules or his precedents: let him use such sagacity and judgment as he has, and make the best improvement he can by them with caution and sobriety. If he can penetrate into the reasons and tendencies of his rules, this will keep him in the spirit of them, and enable him to apply them more effectually to particular occasions. And for such as are qualified to discern the whole rationale of the Gospel, and lay it out upon a regular plan, mutually connected in all its parts, they cannot do better than exercise their talents that way. I have contributed my endeavours for the benefit of those among them who may want assistance, or industry, or leisure, or perhaps may profit by my mistakes: for the discovery of an error is one great avenue into truth, which else one might never have thought of, or never apprehended needful to bestow any pains upon.

It can do no man hurt to be fully master of his science, with all its uses, particular purposes to be answered by it, and manners of operation in effecting them; whatever he may communicate to other people: not that I would suppose him niggard of his treasures, nor grudging any fellow creature the benefit of all he has to bestow, but observant of what each subject is capable of receiving, and keeping to himself whatever he sees would do mischief to another. For what is one man's meat is another man's poison: wherefore the characters of men must be studied, and discretion used to distribute what is suitable to the digestion and temperament of the receivers.

I do not hold it needful in these days, and if needful surely not allowable, to raise any misapprehensions purposely; but people will run into them inadvertently. When taught some important truth or salutary practice, they will be adding imaginations of their own, concerning the grounds supporting the one, or effects immediately produced by the other. I have met with persons who believed the soul immaterial because we dream in our sleep: and multitudes stand persuaded that the water of baptism directly washes the spiritual part from the corruption derived through Adam. The injudicious zealot, who proceeds by rote and rule without knowing why, increases such-like mistakes; for he has fallen into them himself, and will defend them against every one who attempts to set him right, by strings of detached texts and calling him heretic or infidel. The injudicious admirer of reason who takes it to lie solely in criticism, overthrows them with might and main, never reflecting what farther ruins he may cause to follow thereby.

48. But the man of discretion uses his eyes to look around, regarding connections and consequences as well as single objects. Where he finds truth supported by error, he spares the latter for sake of the former: not out of fondness for such kind of support, but until he can provide a better by working up the solid wall, which requires time and patience to lay the stones one by one as you can get them into their places. He knows that overthrow is a very improper method of edification: for spiritual building is the very reverse of common masonry: you must begin on top, and work downwards. The learner must have a bed to lie upon in the first place, so you must contrive him garrets before he can think of the other conveniences of a family: he cannot suspend his action until fully instructed, but must pursue some tenor of conduct immediately, and be doing before he is knowing; therefore you must urge him with rules, and watch opportunities for letting him into the reasons afterwards. In the mean while he will find reasons for himself as he can catch them at hap hazard: these our discerning artificer considers as shorings to sustain the upper story, and knows that to overthrow them all at once must occasion a terrible downfall: so he lets them alone, and goes on calmly with his building down to the chambers and lowest foundation, well knowing the slanting shores will successively drop of themselves as the superincumbent pressure is taken off by having a firmer support to rest upon.

No work can be performed in a masterly manner without continually keeping in view the principal design, and the plan of operation for effecting it: now we have seen the design of the Gospel was to rectify the sentiments, and gain an entire dominion for the rational faculties over the sensitive; and the method employed for this end is by name and authority. For the perfection of the mind consists in a soundness of judgment, and the perfection of human Nature in a due subordination of the inferior powers thereto: but authority is the most effectual means to counterbalance the impulses of appetite, and keep the mind attentive to profitable objects; for one may judge rightly upon trifles, yet the judgment is not sound unless the matters exercised upon are solid and availing. Therefore the principal care to be taken is to preserve this authority in full vigour, and point it from time to time upon the services wanted; to be cautious of weakening it by overstraining, or wasting it upon matters of no moment, or of mischievous tendency.

The sum of our duty may be comprised in two words, Bear and Forbear: this a sense of authority and obligation, when strong and lively, can alone enable us to do; our knowledge of their expedience can never raise desire enough to carry us through the task. But endurance and forbearance are not duties in themselves: we are created to enjoy our being, not to live in continual suffering and abstinence, which are then only recommendable when they will secure us from greater suffering, or work an improvement of our happiness: so that we want some direction when to submit to them.

49. This direction the Gospel affords, informing us what to bear and forbear, not in every particular case, which would be impracticable and hurtful, like those tomes of casuistry that have burdened the world in former ages; but by the great exemplar of Christ, by the behaviour of his first disciples, and by general precepts, which instead of taking off the trouble of thinking for ourselves excite us to undergo it, and lead our thoughts into profitable trains whereby we may apply those directions to our particular occasions.

It contains likewise certain matters of speculation, necessary to establish its authority and regulate our opinions, without which the contents spoken of before could not have proved effectual, because it is well known how much our opinions influence our actions. I need instance only in the belief of a Resurrection and future judgment, which is the grand spring or primum mobile of what cares we do take in shaping our conduct.

Both these systems will take very various forms and colours in the imaginations of different persons: they will run into misapprehensions and mistakes concerning them, which it behoves such as are able, to obviate, or cure as far as practicable without injury to the sounder parts. For circumspection is needful here: the shoe must be suited to the foot; the diet accommodated to the constitution and temperature of the body. St. Paul tells us there is meat for men and milk for babes, which is a caution to consult digestions in providing for the ordinary. The stomachs of our remote forefathers seem to have been very weak, their vigour running all into their muscles, which made them such fighting fellows: the Reformation helped to increase the concoctive powers considerably; and the allowance to liberty of conscience and sober argumentation has, I think, still farther strengthened the digestion among our people in general. Wherefore it must be injudicious to adhere too strictly to forms of expression used in old constitutions and articles, for this is bringing us back to our pap again: and those Creeds and Catechisms are best which are most simple and concise, because they will bear digesting into different nutritious juices such as the body shall require, and preserve an external conformity notwithstanding a variety of inward sentiments.

Yet robust as we may think ourselves, there are still many gradations of vigour among us, which require as many various aliments, from the whey, the milk, the strong broths, the chicken, the veal, up to the salted buttock: and sometimes the craving is not satisfied with meats alone, for as the ostrich helps her digestion by swallowing stones which would destroy it in the human kind, so to some few persons, who, like animals of the winged tribe, have corneous stomachs, the niceties of abstraction and knotty speculations, though not meat themselves, assist them in grinding their meat. All which makes it difficult to know how to deal with people: for if you offer a viand ever so little softer than their accustomed diet, they are affronted at your treating them like children, and despise you for an enthusiast; if ever so little stronger, they think you have a design to circumvent them, and detest you for an infidel. And in discourses given out to public inspection, it is not always easy to escape the hazard of being accounted bigot and free-thinker, for the same performance. I have already been told my former volumes* have been suspected of free-thinking, and am under some tremors lest, if this volume† should ever go forth, it may draw upon me a contrary charge: but I am not conscious of any change in sentiment; I seem to myself to have delivered the same substance all along, only translated into the two different languages of Philosophy and Scripture.

Another difficulty springs from the indiscretion of others; there are folks with whom substantial meat might not disagree, yet you dare not trust them with it, because they are like a child that is fond of telling all it knows, and would divulge a taste you desire to conceal, because it might draw some ignorant person to swallow an unwholesome food: I have formerly played

* The sixth and seventh of the first edition, printed at the beginning of this volume.
† The eighth of the first edition.

at back-gammon on Sundays, one hand against the other; I never do it now because I do not like it, but should make no scruple of doing it: yet should scruple to play with anybody else, for fear he might tattle, or we be overheard; not for sake of gaining the character of a righteous Man, but for the same reason St. Paul gives for advising his pupils to abstain from things they were told had been offered to idols.

50. To make the Religion within us complete, we must study not only what sentiments and practices belong to the essence of Religion, but likewise what there is in the ways of the world coming nearest to it. For the design of the Gospel is very extensive, no less than the amendment of the human race: and as there are various degrees of amendment to be worked in this life, and various modes of preparation for the next, it regards aliens and strangers as well as the household of Faith. The force of sympathy and intercourse are well known, whereby the Religion of some may cast a tincture of its colours upon many to whom it cannot diffuse the substance. Our Hopes are in Heaven, but the means of attaining them are by universal Charity to our fellow-creatures upon earth, by contributing to the happiness of mankind, which consists in Health, Peace, and Competence in their fullest latitude, as described in the first Chapter of this Volume [p. , vol. 2, of this edition].

Therefore let us stand ever watchful to do the service that is feasible; if we cannot make a man a good Christian, let us try to make him a good Heathen, a good Jew, a good Free-thinker, or at least free from disquietudes or turbulent passions in his own mind, and a useful member of society; though we should not be able to infuse the peculiar articles of our own belief, still it is a point gained if we can infuse those of natural Religion, or public spirit, or common prudence, resulting therefrom, by any abstractions, argumentations, exhortations, or other methods most likely to succeed.

But there is a saying, Physician, cure thyself, which we may take for an admonition to begin at home, and lay down our own plan of conduct for the lower offices of life as well as the highest, that the whole may be uniform, all the parts aptly joining in concert with one another. For we cannot confine our attention solely to religious matters: some of us who have great leisure may employ it in that way more frequently, but we cannot all, nor can any of us always be labouring in the vineyard; for there are the fields, the meadows, the markets, that demand our services elsewhere. God has called us, by the condition of our bodies and circumstances of situation wherein we are placed by his Providence, to cares for our health, for our subsistence, for our families, for the duties of our profession, and even for the recreation and amusement of one another: and in all these we must guide ourselves by certain rules of sobriety, propriety, and discretion, deduced remotely from those of our religion; or else we may prove a scandal to it, and whatever light may be within us will not so shine before men, that they may see anything thereby for which to glorify our Father who is in heaven.

51. Then for mankind in general, you cannot expect to instil much of your system into them: many are drawn out of your reach by avocations of providing for their necessary subsistence, by their trades and voyages, and by the magic circle of fashion whirling them perpetually in a giddy round of unavailing trifles; many pre-occupied by some ruling passion for wealth, or fame, or preferment, or popularity. And it is fitting that things should be so: the supply of conveniences for life require it, the keeping up of cheerfulness and activity among the indolent require it, commerce and

the public service require it: but these avocations afford admission to a very slender pittance, or a few careless thoughts of religion. If you can get a little into them, the more the better, but you must proceed discreetly, watching favourable opportunities; for they are seldom disposed to hear you, or presently cloyed, and if you go to importune them longer or in another manner than they like, you disgust them, and will never get their ear afterwards.

I would not in this place remind you of the caution given to beware of throwing your pearls before swine; for that is a word of contempt, and many of those who would refuse your pearls are persons of no contemptible character; but certainly it is waste to throw anything valuable where it would be left upon the ground: you had better present them with something suitable to their relish, which may turn to good account in their hands.

If St. Paul resolved to know nothing save Christ and him crucified, it was because he was an Apostle called solely to the functions of that sacred office, which lay in magnifying the name of Christ, spreading his authority and inculcating his doctrines: but we are not so appropriated; we stand in a lower station wherein the acquisition of other knowledge will be serviceable, called to every office of Christian Charity, or from which a profit may redound of any sort, or anywhere among mankind.

It has been shown in the Chapter on Economy, that Providence employs the sciences, the arts, the pursuits, the opinions, guiding the course of affairs relative only to this world, to co-operate with Religion and Philosophy towards perfecting the human race. Many of them have received improvement from men of little Religion and wicked lives, some of whom have been found eminently instrumental in advancing the interests of Religion: as witness that great blessing, the Reformation, which was not owing to the piety or virtues of the Monarch. For God uses evil things, and things indifferent, to bring forth good: it would be impious in us to do evil that good might come of it, because we cannot know when it will produce that consequence, therefore ought never to encourage it; but it is highly commendable in us to raise what good we find feasible from those evils we cannot help, or from things indifferent, and to concur with men of private views in working a benefit which was not their motive, and advancing a good purpose whereof they have not the least knowledge or conception.

52. I have now gone through my scheme from the roots to the smallest branches sprouting therefrom. The Rationalist cannot complain of me for amusing him with an unintelligible language and mystery: for he must see it has been my aim all along to unravel mysteries, to find a clear sense of expressions he may have thought unintelligible, and to show the scheme of the Gospel conformable in its most essential parts with that of sound Philosophy. The only difficulty he can boggle at is, that of Nature being made imperfect so as to need the helping hand of its Creator to make it answer the purpose intended in the original plan, and the union of the Deity with Man: and for that I have prepared him, in the sections above cited in my Chapter on Providence. That stumbling-block once gotten over, he will find all beyond run smoothly in a regular chain of consequences. But if he have an invincible repugnance against all supernatural interposition whatever, I can only send him back to my Chapter on divine Economy, where it has been attempted to do all that can be done for Christianity, considered as an event eminently providential, without aid of miracle, or anything divine descending from above.

With respect to the orthodox, I am only apprehensive lest they should esteem the very unveiling of mystery indiscreet, because obscurity adds to the sacredness of an object. I know it does so in many cases, but times and countries must be consulted, and it seems to deserve mature consideration, whether the keeping ourselves involved in clouds and darkness in the present age be not more likely to weaken, than fortify the authority of a doctrine. I hope there is nothing in the whole of this Chapter detrimental to the Christian Religion as taught in our Church, but flatter myself there are some hints at least which may prove helpful towards a rational, yet orthodox explanation of some of the most difficult and important doctrines. Those hints I have been enabled to give by my examination into human Nature, the proper ideas of Substance, Identity, Individuality, Union, and other speculations discerned by the light of Nature: which then will appear to have been objects well deserving my labours in the pursuit.

CHAP. XXII.

DIVINE SERVICES.

In the four preceding Chapters we have found frequent use for the Telescope, having distant objects and spacious scenes, no less than those of universal Nature and the fortunes of the whole human species, to contemplate. We have endeavoured to observe the ways of Heaven in the conduct of affairs among mankind from the beginning of recorded time, and by their bearings to discover the ultimate point whereto they tend. We have looked backward and forward, tracing the several lines in the plan of Providence, so far as God has been pleased to lay them within the grasp of human comprehension; which we have seen can hold enough to display their symmetry and proportion, and to show them correspondent parts of one great and gracious design. Researches which were not the wanton excursions of vain curiosity or unavailing speculation, but may turn to good profit by making us more sensible of the Goodness and Equity of our almighty Governor, alike beneficent to all his creatures; better satisfied with the lot of our existence, admitting us to our full share of his inexhaustible bounty; better contented under evils we feel or behold, as being sooner or later productive of an incomparably greater advantage to the sufferer.

We then reviewed the stupendous scheme by the light of the Gospel, which discovered to us wheel within wheel, and intricacies of Wisdom undiscerned before. For it appeared now that the Pantology of second causes had been purposely drawn imperfect to leave room for the Divine interpositions: Man being made in weakness, by which he would undoubtedly fall into perpetual misery, nor was there any remedy provided among the laws of Nature for his deliverance. But God in his eternal councils had prepared a remedy, by an exertion of his Omnipotence, whereon he established a plan of Soterialogy for the restoration and perfection of human Nature, to be advanced by gradual progress from the foundations of this earth through the next stage of being, and until the final consummation of all things.

But those large ideas are too spacious for every imagination to contain, and too refined for every palate to relish, nor where they do find entrance and reception can they continue long in full strength of impression, or vividness of colour: for the necessary attention to our bodily wants, to the

common business of life, our troubles, our passions, and importunate desires, cast a veil around, confining our view to the little spot before us, nor can we raise a concern for anything beyond the present moment or occurrences of the passing day. A man in pain or sickness has no spirit to handle the Telescope, and in the hurry of business, pleasure, or company, has not a thought to spare for the Mundane Soul, or laws of universal nature.

Therefore we must use management with ourselves, and endeavour to work by art what we could not compass by the strength of reason; striving to imprint in lasting characters upon the imagination so much of our contemplative scenes as her coarse canvass can take off, that is, the conclusions resulting therefrom, which when well inculcated make the essence of Faith, and Hope, and Charity. For we may have a lively sense of the Power, the Wisdom, the Goodness of God, when we have not in display before us the particulars whereby those Attributes are manifested: we may have an unreserved trust in his Mercy, an acquiescence in every dispensation, a content under evils befalling us without an actual discernment of the manner wherein they operate to our good: we may have a cordial benevolence to our fellow-creatures without an immediate apprehension of the connections whereby their interests are linked with our own. If these sentiments can be fixed upon the imagination by the clear and full convictions of our understanding, I conceive they are likely to be most durable; yet whatever way we can get them to take strong hold there, is well worth the pursuing.

For it may be remembered that the mechanical motions among our ideas bear a large proportion to those excited by premeditated design. Imagination is the seat of our persuasions, conductor for the most of our actions, and often the employer of our understanding. It is like a house-clock, which may be set right now and then by hand upon careful observation of other regulators, but ordinarily is itself the regulator of all business in the family. And this faculty depends altogether upon the condition of our internal machinery, which is affected by habit, custom, external appearance, and sensible objects. These things then, judiciously applied, may bring it to run spontaneously for a continuance in those trains which the most exalted exercises of our understanding can only throw it into for a while.

2. Most of us, as remarked in the last section of Chapter XX. who live in a private station with no more than common abilities, rarely meet with opportunities of doing an important service either to religion, or the public, or our neighbours: therefore our business lies almost entirely with ourselves and our own minds, to cultivate such dispositions there as may keep us ever attentive and zealous to labour for the general interest, and the good of others whenever an occasion shall present, and may prepare our internal part to become a fit member in the kingdom of the just.

These dispositions, wherein the theological and moral virtues consist, are best improved by the practice of good works done in pursuance of their impulses: for a man can never strengthen his charity or his public spirit, so much by theory and meditation, as by acts of kindness or real patriotism, where neither fame, nor interest, nor private affection, nor expectation of a return has any share in the deed. But since we have not a call to such good works, sufficient to keep up our propensity to do them, it would quickly languish and become extinct if expedients were not provided to supply it continually with fuel: therefore certain things indifferent in themselves are enjoined, that we may have an opportunity of exercising our obedience in performing the injunction.

In these consists Religion strictly so called, when distinguished from morality: and they are termed divine services, not that we can suppose them of any service to God, but because being of no direct apparent service either to ourselves or our fellow-creatures, we perform them upon an opinion of their being pleasing in his sight: which gives them a similar efficacy upon our minds with actual good works done upon the same motive of pleasing him. Therefore are they consequentially of important service, both to ourselves and all whom we may have to deal with, as they nourish in us an habitual trust and dependence upon the Almighty: which may insure us tranquillity of mind in times of difficulty or danger, and beget in us a readiness to that which alone he will esteem a service to himself, the doing good to his creatures, and joining in every general interest wherein he shall be pleased to afford us an opportunity of becoming in any little degree instrumental.

This then being their design, if we keep this in memory, it will help to direct us in the use and application of them: for we are not to imagine ourselves the better merely for having attended divine services, sermons, private prayer, psalm-singing, reading, meditation, or the like, but for the effect worked by them upon our hearts, in the improvement of any good habitual sentiment there. But that effect will correspond exactly with our management in the exercise of them. If we go through it only to please the world or our superiors, it will be of none avail at all: if we perform the outward actions perfunctorily upon a persuasion of their being duties, it is better than nothing; for every act of obedience, however slovenly paid, will help to fix the sense of a superior power, to whom some duty is owing: yet it is very little better than nothing, as it can beget only a servile dread of a rigorous master, whose orders we must comply with that he may not be angry with us. And if we do our work by starts, or remissly, the effect will be proportionable to the temper wherein we receive it.

Wherefore it behoves us all along in our divine services to endeavour casting our minds into the posture suitable to that speculative or practical virtue, whether trust, or hope, or humility, or self-denial or prudence, or charity, which they are respectively adapted to encourage: for their operation is not like a charm, by supernatural efficacy, but by mechanical influence of language, gestures, and objects, upon the imagination; and if the Holy Spirit be aiding, it is not so much by giving additional force to the means of grace, as by co-operating with the endeavours of the recipient. But some of our services being considerably long, there are persons who complain they cannot keep up the proper attention throughout; it may then be recommended to select such parts as are most profitable, or they can most heartily join in: however, let them try what they can, and if they really do so, they will do enough. And perhaps the length was calculated for the benefit of such persons as can pick up ten minutes' attention here and there out of an hour, who could not carry it on the whole ten minutes at one stretch: if this were the case, we must suppose every generation grows more giddy than the former; for additions have been made every now and then to our offices, but never any retrenchments.

3. But the manner of performing our religious exercises will depend in great measure upon the spirit or motive wherewith we enter upon them, which I conceive had better be that of hope and advantage, than fear or obligation. I am not ignorant that you cannot bring people of no religion into any without suggesting motives of terror and necessity: for Religion has nothing inviting to their palate, by which you might allure them, nor

anything profitable in their estimation by which you might tempt them, because they have no idea of profit unless in the increase of their possessions, or gratification of their desires and humours. So you must represent it as an indispensable duty, which they must acquit themselves of at their utmost peril: therefore I am not for discarding those engines, as being needful enough with persons and upon occasions, where wanted. But for such as have made any intimacy with Religion, and have tasted the sweets of a rational and regular conduct, a dispassionate, benign, and holy temper of mind, I think they may find more noble inducements to carry them through the exercises that tend to increase those blessings in them, than the dread of mischief, or thought of a task that must be finished.

Nor do I pretend to deny there is an obligation to those exercises, nor that grievous mischief will ensue upon the omission; but it is not unusual in common life to do things we are obliged to, without any thought of the obligation, where we have other incitements starting foremost to the notice. He that passes through a turnpike must pay the toll, or his horses will be seized; but if the road be very convenient for him, and made safe and smooth from miry and foundrous it was before, the toll comes from him in the nature of a voluntary contribution, nor does he once think of the seizure. He that should behave rudely, indecently, and offensively in company, would run the hazard of being turned out of it, and losing his character; those would be very disagreeable events, yet who of us ever finds occasion to carry them in contemplation? for use and the pleasure and credit of civil deportment engage us to it effectually. In like manner, how obligatory soever the duties of Religion be, while we have a just sense of the benefits accruing from them, this will turn the obligation into matter of choice and prudence, so that we shall escape the danger without thinking of it: we need only reserve our apprehensions as motives lying dormant in the box, ready to assist in the scale at seasons when passion, pleasure, or indolence press so hard upon us that our moral sense becomes too feeble to actuate us alone.

But that Religion has been made so much a task and terror, I apprehend owing to the craft of former ages: for there is nothing like frighting men to make them governable, and to open an easy introduction for gainful superstitions. Our modern enthusiasts, though perhaps they have not so deep designs as their predecessors, employ the same engine to draw crowded mobs around them. They persuade men that nobody can be saved who does not first believe himself actually in a state of damnation: they have the words perdition, reprobation, hell flames, and eternal torments, perpetually in their mouths: delight to describe the terrors of the last judgment, when the rich and mighty of this world shall be haled about by devils, and mankind in general be overwhelmed in the unfathomable gulph, except a very few of their own followers: yet are these continually liable to be drawn aside among the multitudes, unless they neglect their lawful professions to follow lectures and practise austerities prescribed them; so are always kept in the terror of a person walking along the icy brink of a precipice, every moment in danger of falling irrecoverably, if he chance to cast off his eye upon any other object.

These topics of rhetoric might do good service, judiciously applied, would but the professors submit to the government of more discerning heads than their own, who should put into their hands only the voluptuous, the debauched, the giddy, the grossminded, and the sanguine, upon whom they might work more powerfully than any rational discourses; but to the

phlegmatic, the serious, the weak-nerved, and the timorous, with whom Hope is the virtue wherein they are already most deficient, but who I believe make up the gross of their congregations, this regimen is arrant poison, fit only to drive the patient into desperation or madness. In short, they too much resemble Doctor Sangrado, who prescribed bleeding and copious draughts of warm water for all distempers, the dropsy and the atrophy, as well as the fever, the surfeit, and the plethora.

Nor are other more reasonable teachers, especially among the sectaries, wholly exempt from the like indiscretion, probably through laziness or incapacity to do better, because fear is the easiest passion for an orator to work upon; and being more fond of producing great effects upon their audience than careful to consider whether those effects be good or bad, they apply to the most sensible part of the human composition. By this management Religion becomes a melancholy burdensome thing, which nobody would submit to if it were not for the dreadful miseries consequent upon the neglect of it. The pious are affrighted, instead of being exhorted or persuaded, into their devotions, which vitiates the performance of them; for a man can never do his work so well in a fright, as by a calm and determinate resolution to do his best upon a persuasion of its being for his benefit.

Hence come the anxieties and suspicions of having failed in due reverence and devotion; the sighs and groans, the turned-up eyes and mortified countenances of the godly; which besides the hurt and disquietude it brings upon them, does an injury to Religion itself, by making it the aversion and laughing-stock of the world; and I suppose gave occasion to my Lord Shaftesbury to object, that so much care is taken of our future happiness as to make us throw away all our present. For this were not true of genuine Religion, which though it may sometimes, and that very rarely, require us to sacrifice our private pleasures and interests in its service, yet is there no real act of sound Religion that does not tend to the good order, the benefit, and happiness of mankind in this life. As God loveth a cheerful giver, so is he best pleased with a willing obedience, unforced by the terror of punishment or necessity of obligation. Therefore we serve him most acceptably when persuaded that thereby we serve ourselves; for he wants nothing of us but that we should embrace the means of improving our nature which he has vouchsafed us.

4. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, but perfect love casteth out fear: while the love remains imperfect, and at intervals wherein it cannot raise a glow of warmth enough to set our spirits in motion, we must supply the deficiency by fear; but whatever we can do by love will be much better done than by any other spring. But the love of God, as explained before in the Chapter on Charity, is a different kind of sentiment from that we ought to bear our neighbour: it is not the desire of benefiting the party who is the object of it, for we cannot anywhere find fuel to feed such a desire; it is a filial dependence upon God as the author of all good, and a well-grounded persuasion that whatever we do with a rational idea of pleasing him will prove most beneficial to ourselves, or the common interest of our fellow-creatures. Yet there are great mistakes in the exhortations to this love: for men are enjoined it as a duty, and threatened with what will happen to them if they fail in it. So fond are some folks of fear, that they would make it do everything, and extract the flame of love out of this chilling principle; which seems an unnatural way of proceeding, not un-

like the Virtuoso's scheme, who would needs try to make a burning-glass of ice.

But affection and persuasion do not lie under our command to raise them in what degree, or turn them upon what objects we please, by mere dint of resolution: so the duty can extend no further than to the diligent application of the means naturally efficacious to produce them. We cannot possibly fright ourselves into love, nor into the belief of a thing whereof we do not discern the evidence: all that fear can do in this case is to stifle our consciousness of wanting the affection and the belief, that the shame of it may not stare us in the face, which can only tend to teach us an hypocrisy so covert as to deceive our very selves, and thereby prevent our using the proper remedies, for curing the sore, because not perceiving that we have one. Love can no otherwise be acquired than by a sense of amiableness in the object, and that sense must spring from a discernment of its tendency to something we desired before. Therefore the only way to make it sincere and hearty is by observation of the benefits accruing to us from Religion, in improving the serenity of our mind and regularity of our conduct.

By praying to God we increase our trust and dependence on him, as a sure protection in all situations: by praising him we recall many blessings to our thoughts we should otherwise have overlooked or forgotten, and thereby become better satisfied with our condition; by confession, we grow acquainted with our defects, and which way to apply our cares for curing them: by profession of Faith we inculcate the convictions of our understanding upon our imagination, making them habitual and practical persuasions: by intercession we extend our Charity to all around us, not excepting the worthless and the wicked: by expressions of forgiveness we quench the sparks of revenge, envy, anger, animosity, and all unruly passions that would make havoc in our breasts; by acknowledgment of the Divine Wisdom in bringing forth good out of both good and evil, we find encouragement to the exercise of our little powers, and learn patience under misfortunes, cross accidents, and injuries that fall upon us; by pious resolutions we gather strength to give our judgment the mastery over sudden humour and fond inclination: by compliance with ceremonies we inure ourselves to discipline, and render our inferior faculties more tractable by the prudential rules of our own reason. To go through every particular would be endless: but we may say, in short, there is no religious exercise rightly performed, which does not help to improve the growth of some salutary virtue, and no virtue which may not receive nourishment from some religious exercise.

I do not doubt there are many persons who have experienced, that on coming out from their devotions, they feel themselves in a manner new creatures; they seem above the world and all its allurements; they have no sensual desires, nor vanity, nor selfishness, nor resentment, nor illwill to anybody: no bias to indulgence and indolence, no repining at their condition, fretfulness at accidents befallen them, nor uneasy dread of dangers whereto human nature is liable: but are inspired with the stoical love of rectitude for its own sake, and could almost do and suffer anything for the glory they have had in contemplation before them. And though they find those impressions quickly obscured by the common business of life as soon as they begin to engage in it again, yet will they gather some additional strength upon every renewal, until at length they come to have an influence upon the general tenor of mind and practice, moulding them into the frame wherein solid happiness and usefulness of character consist. The knowledge

of these desirable effects will make them feel a sensible joy on having succeeded in performing their religious duties well, and give them vexation whenever conscious of not having improved their opportunities as they might: which of course might excite an earnest desire to manage better another time, as matter of the highest expedience, and would urge them to their duty, although there were no threatenings annexed to the neglect of it, nor obligation to render it indispensable.

5. Yet, when raised above fear by having gotten another principle, enabling us to do our work better without it, there is still a danger to be guarded against, and that is from vanity. There are some people who do not so much desire to be good, as to be better than others; as if Religion was only a secondary aim, to raise our credit with the world or in our own estimation. But this motive will vitiate our performances more than that of the fear we have discarded; for there are few things more opposite to the spirit of Religion than vanity, as being incompatible with Charity, and a hearty zeal for any general interest. The vain man has always a separate interest of his own, which is promoted by the ill success of his neighbour, and whoever comes upon a line with him stands in his way: therefore he is perpetually tempted to censure, misconstrue, and depreciate, nor can ever heartily endeavour to improve a virtue in another person, unless in order to boast of his own performance, and triumph over him thereupon; neither will he be secure against the temptation of making a merit of his piety, secretly in his own imagination even with God himself.

But it is very unsafe to be fond of drawing comparisons with others upon any subjects, especially those relating to religious and moral virtues: or scrutinizing into their actions, unless for our own instruction by observing their successes and miscarriages impartially, together with the causes of them. The best way will be to consider Religion as a beneficial thing, and study diligently how to make our own advantages of it; never troubling our heads with what other people do, unless as occasion offers to assist them. For we need not be afraid of retarding ourselves by helping another forward: Heaven is big enough to hold us all, nor shall we find a whit the more difficulty in getting in for seeing thousands besides travel with greater speed; on the contrary, since the general interests of the species, in the perfecting human nature, is to be completed by the joint labours of multitudes, the more we see setting their hands to the work, and the greater proficiency they make, the better reason we have to rejoice.

And the custom of regarding religious exercises as matter of prudence and advantage, will assist us in adjusting the measure, as well as the manner of them. Not that I would persuade anybody to rely solely upon his own judgment in this point, but have a due regard to authority, established usage, example, and recommendation of persons of a judicious piety: but it should be remembered there are extremes on both sides: a man may be righteous over much, as righteousness is understood of assiduities in externals, as well as too little; the learned and pious sometimes have their whims and extravagances, as well as the beau and the giddy girl: and the circumstances of situation and temperament will make that inexpedient at one season which was profitable at another. Every man has some judgment of his own if he will take care to exert it, and though it does not become him to refuse any helps at hand to assist it, yet neither ought he to forbear making the best use of it he can. Therefore it is dangerous to pin an implicit faith upon some particular doctor or writer, because his whimsies happen to strike our fancy by tallying with our own: we are not to cry, I

am of Paul, nor I of Apollos, but I am of Christ; that is, of that head whom we follow best and serve best, by doing any little real service to his body, or any the smallest member of it; not forgetting our own spiritual part, which is one of his members.

It behoves us to try all things and hold fast by the best; but if we do not try calmly and carefully, we shall run a hazard of holding fast by the worst. Whence it appears highly expedient to exercise what judgment we have, both upon persons and things, observing from time to time what effect our religious exercises produce upon our minds and our manners: for they have no intrinsic value, but it is their tendency alone to work a good effect that makes them duties pleasing to God: we may be a little awkward in making our observations at first, but practice will bring us gradually to be more expert. If then we find they leave none, or a very transient impression behind; if they call us off from the active duties of our station, from our attention to the services we may do one another; if they make us melancholy, desponding, fretful, morose, contemptuous, vain, censorious, or inequitable; if they nourish our indolence under a notion of superseding the practical duties by atoning for the omission of them; if they make us too important in our own estimation, urging us to vie with the Apostles and primitive Martyrs, and undertake exploits far above our talents; we may conclude assuredly, that we have been faulty, either in the choice of them, or in the manner or the measure of performing them.

For some of those inconveniences above mentioned will ensue from the excess of devotion, when carried on so long until it becomes a dead form, without any alacrity of mind to give it life: for even our mental functions depend upon the organs of our machinery which can continue their play only for a certain time, and if we go on to force them beyond their strength, they will throw in uneasy sensations, quickly corrupting to all the gloomy and sour humours. It is true, the commerce of the world is apt to render them stiff, so that some force and exertion is necessary to make them do what they can: but it is our business to find out by experience and observation, what they are capable of performing with spirit, beyond which we can expect no service from them either agreeable to God, or profitable to ourselves.

6. But there is one set of religious exercises, those I mean relating to humiliation, the use of which seems very little understood, and therefore deserves a particular consideration. I believe it is now pretty much out of fashion, because the generality of mankind are too fond of indulgence and thinking highly of themselves, ever to cast their eyes willingly upon an object that may tend to mortify them: but for that very reason it might prove the more serviceable, if they could be prevailed upon once in a while to do it. Those who practise this exercise perhaps are the least susceptible of benefit therefrom, considering the idea wherein they enter upon it being persons of cold and timorous constitutions, who esteem it their duty to afflict and think the worst of themselves possible; whereby they only increase the defect in their natural temperament, and persuade themselves that the very act of humiliation without reference to consequences is an acceptable sacrifice. But it is an unworthy notion of the Giver of all blessings, to imagine him delighted with the affliction of his creatures, unless when it tends to their greater benefit: it is then worth while to inquire what are the benefits of humiliation, and whether the same may not be obtained without making it a melancholy and afflicting work.

A man living in some of the back settlements of America, on hearing

there is a party of enemy Indians coming that way, will, I suppose, examine carefully into the state and condition of his house, particularly the weak parts of it, inspecting the doors and windows, and searching for any loosened panel in the walls where they might possibly break in: he will look over all his arms and ammunition, to see what he has in store, and whether there be any rust or damp or defect among them: and all this he will do without taking pains to afflict himself at what he finds amiss, but in order to provide for his necessary defence upon having a thorough knowledge of his wants and his weaknesses.

He that has an infirm constitution will do wisely to make himself well acquainted with his particular infirmities, to observe what kind and quantity of diet, what accidents, employments, and exercises have disagreed with him; that he may not think too highly of his stoutness so as to brave weathers, undertake fatigues, or indulge in entertainments that would hurt him. If he vex and fret at being no stouter, it will do him no good either in his health or in the eye of Heaven: nor can the knowledge of his infirmities profit him otherwise than by exciting his vigilance to use every caution against whatever might increase them, and pursue every regimen and management that may help to amend them. In like manner it is highly expedient for us, who are all of very crazy constitutions in the internal part, and have dangers and enemies perpetually surrounding us without doors, to take ourselves into close examination, particularly on the worst side of our characters: but we ought to do it impartially, not thinking to merit by making matters worse than they are: for we have gross failings enow to contemplate, and if we dwell too strongly upon the trivial, it is a shrewd presumption we have overlooked the more flagrant.

Nor is there any Religion in trying to afflict ourselves at the discovery: our groanings make no sweet melody among the heavenly choirs, neither can they answer any good end to ourselves unless we be so lumpish a composition as never to stir without the dread of smart, and have no desire for anything beneficial, nor laudable ambition to rise a little step higher in the scale of virtue. Some displeasure will naturally arise upon the view of our disorders the first time we turn our reflection that way, but he that has been used to the exercise knows beforehand what he is to expect; so his imperfection is nothing new to him that he should be mortified at the discovery: the particular examination of it is rather a cheerful work, because giving him hopes that he shall gather information from thence how to proceed in the rectifying it; it is like the search made by a mariner, who knows his ship is leaky, and thinks it the luckiest thing in the world if he can find out all the leaks, because till then he has no chance of stopping them. Therefore he will search industriously into all his corruptions and all his weaknesses, what irregular desires he has, what unruly passions and inveterate habits, in what particular virtues he falls most deficient, wherein he has done amiss, or not so well as he might upon the occasion, what temptations have been most apt to prevail upon him, and what were the real motives of actions for which he has been most forward to applaud himself.

These inquiries will teach him not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, nor to be too secure against attacks, nor yet above improvement; yet neither need they make him despond, as knowing that forewarned is forearmed, and that the sense of his imperfections will bring him within the verge of that protection which will raise him so far above them as is needful in this vale of mortality: they will convince him that he is not a completely rational creature, nor entire master of his own

thoughts and actions, therefore must use management with himself and proceed with caution, taking the benefit of whatever helps are afforded him; and will give him a candour, a compassion, and fellow feeling towards imperfections he sees in other persons. Some such examination, I apprehend, would be particularly salutary to the Free-thinker, as it might abate his super-abundant self-sufficiency, and his high opinion of human reason, which is his grand infirmity introducing a thousand others: for he runs into errors and absurdities by thinking too highly of himself, and he thinks too highly of himself for want of knowing himself.

But our blemishes and foibles are a very unwelcome prospect, which the eye does not willingly fix upon, but is apt to skim lightly over, unless there be some additional weight besides expedience hung upon the attention to keep it steady to the work. Therefore it is commonly recommended to make this exercise a matter of devotion, and rank it among the divine services: because by placing ourselves more immediately in the presence of God, and drawing out the list of our corruptions as it were for his inspection, we shall be likely to do it more completely. For we dare not prevaricate with the Searcher of hearts; and the awe of the divine Majesty before whom we stand, will make us more earnest, more honest and impartial in the scrutiny: whereby we may discover lurking corruptions, secret propensities, and many unjustifiable motives, having given the real spring to our most specious performances, which would have escaped us in the ordinary way of meditation without the check of that bridle upon our imagination.

7. Very great stress has been laid upon the duty of fasting, which being a medicine in the spiritual dispensary, the qualities and uses of it deserve to be well considered before it be prescribed. Now I conceive it operates as a damper of the spirits, and weakener of that attachment we have to the common enjoyments and engagements of life: therefore ought to be administered to such patients with whom that intention is requisite to be pursued, and in no greater measure than suffices to answer it.

But there are various degrees of fasting: the abstinence from all food, or from flesh meats, for whole days together, was strongly enjoined in former times, perhaps not so much for the sake of Religion, as to force men by the inconveniences of it to purchase a dispensation with their money: so that he was the best son of the Church, not who starved himself most, but who gave most largely to be excused from the obligation to starve. Such abstinence might be very advisable to your turtle eaters, city feast hunters, and persons who live in a continual round of pleasures; but for old women and others who have frequent occasion to converse with their apothecaries, I hold it stark naught: for they have more need of something to raise their spirits than to depress them, and their scruples, despondencies, and murmurings, proceed in great measure from poorness of blood or stagnation of the circulating juices, occasioned by the feeble tone of their vessels, want of exercise, or of seasonable recreation; and if they could apply with more glee to their common employments, they might return from them with better alacrity to their devotions.

For my own part; who am of a rather melancholy temperament and cold digestion, I could never reap any benefit from fasting, though I have tried it formerly, but found it enfeeble my understanding, and make me less fit for religious exercises: and had I continued it till this time, I believe my Chapters would have dissolved into a water-gruel style, and been still more deficient than they are in a rational, cheerful strain of piety.

Nevertheless, moderation and temperance can do hurt to no man; he may keep a continual fast in this sense with good profit, and if he rise up now and then with half a meal, he may find himself lighter and more alert for any serious application; at least it will inure his appetites to discipline, and help to give him the command over them: which is the more needful because civility and custom, often laying temptations to excess in the way, it would be doubly dangerous to have a domestic enemy importuning him. As to higher degrees of abstinence, I shall not pretend to decide upon them: since they are strongly recommended, it becomes every man to make the trial; once or twice cannot spoil his constitution, and then he may consult experience, than whom he cannot have a physician of better authority, for the continuing or leaving them off.

But in whatever measure or manner he practises them, it will be expedient he should think them not so much duties in themselves, as means assisting him to perform his other duties the better: for if he regards them as actual services, he may be apt to imagine that after having gone through so laborious a task, he may be allowed a little relaxation from attending to his conduct. This must needs throw him off his guard when entering into the common transactions of life, and then his passions and desires having been kept suspended for a while, would return upon him with fresh vigour: which might make his case too much resemble that of the man out of whom a devil had been cast, and he returned to his house and found it swept and garnished, and then took unto him seven other devils more wicked than the former, so that his last state was worse than the first.

8. As there are few of our religious exercises which have not a considerable mixture of prayer, it will be worth while to examine into the nature of that species of devotion. Prayer is one of the principal means of grace, and therein lies its whole efficacy. I have endeavoured in the Chapter under that title to explain the idea of Grace considered as an effect worked upon us, which was a disposition of mind to some sentimental or practicad virtue, with more than common vigour and alertness: and though we arel taught that this cannot be effected without aid of the Holy Spirit, yet he never produces it of himself, but only co-operates with our endeavours to supply their want of strength; therefore some natural means must always be put in use to obtain an effusion of grace.

Now prayer is a serious meditation and expression of our desires in the sight of God, and as it were in conversation with him: we are indeed never really out of his sight during any one moment of our lives, though upon common occasions we think nothing of it, nor is it always convenient that we should, therefore can receive no effect therefrom upon ourselves: but when imagining ourselves actually before him, the solemnity of his immediate presence will give an acuteness to our meditations, and a sincerity to our desires, which will make us judge more impartially and soundly than we could otherwise have done, and desire things heartily to which at other times we had a secret reluctance. And since habits are learned by repeated single acts, an assiduity in prayer has a natural tendency to beget virtues in us that could not have been acquired by reason and instruction: in which way alone I apprehend it is that we receive an answer to our prayers.

It is written, Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you: but no expositor ever understood thereby that we should receive indiscriminately whatever we please to ask for. The wisest among us may sometimes ask for things that would be mischievous to

them if granted: and though they should confine their requests to increase of grace and virtue, from which there is no hazard of mischief to them, yet the granting it may be improper, as frustrating those grand designs of Providence, which we have seen, in some preceding Chapters, are worked out by frailties and imperfections among the creatures. Therefore we are taught to understand by the promise, that God will give the devout worshipper what he knows in his wisdom will be good for him, whether contained in the petition or not, so far as is consistent with the good of other creatures with whom he stands connected.

But we cannot believe otherwise than that God, who is the Author of all powers, the fountain of all good things, will of his own free Bounty give unto his creatures all the good that is proper for them, and has already provided measures in his courses of nature and fortune, requisite to produce it: therefore prayer does not operate upon him, but upon ourselves. For there is no room to expect that our importunities should prevail upon him to depart a tittle from the determinations he has made in perfect Wisdom, which comprise everything, that is to befall us: we are not to look for miraculous interpositions among the motions of matter on our behalf, neither does the office of the Holy Spirit lie in turning the course of events, nor causing alterations in external bodies, but solely in working upon the minds of men.

But it has pleased God to make the right exercise of our Freewill one among the causes procuring the good that shall befall us, and to render the good he gives us effectual or not, according to the disposition and temper wherewith we receive it: therefore prayer, having a natural efficacy to mend the state and disposition of the heart, will enable us to reap the benefit of those good things he has procured for us and put into our power. So it is truly said, Ask and ye shall receive, though we cannot move God to do any single thing he would not have done without our prayer, because we may move ourselves thereby till we come within the stream of his blessings.

Hence it follows, and divines constantly recommend, that we should pray with resignation, for though we ought never to prefer a petition which we do not believe in our sincere judgment beneficial and proper for us to attain, yet we may be mistaken, in which case God will not give us the thing we desire, but a better in lieu: nor will he alter his measures upon our request, but give that which he has already made our devotion a natural means to obtain. So that if we ask with devotion we may be sure of receiving, not perhaps the very thing we have set our hearts upon, but some improvement in our spiritual part, more valuable and more conducive to our present solace of mind and to our future interests.

Hence appears likewise that the benefit of prayer depends entirely upon the manner of performing it, for if we do not pray with faith we might full as well have let it alone: but by Faith we are not to understand a confident assurance of prevailing in the particular point we pray for, for this has no foundation to rest upon either in reason or Scripture. If any one desires to know the proper idea of Faith, it is beyond all skill to explain it better to him than I have already done in the Chapter upon that article, where he will find it the being possessed of a just sense of the divine Attributes, and of the government throughout the Universe being administered in perfect Wisdom and Goodness, so as to order all things for the best. While this sense can be kept up lively and vigorous in the imagination, we may be sure of reaping good benefit by our prayers; whenever it evaporates, they will become empty form of none avail. There-

fore it was that in § 2, I proposed to such as cannot keep their attention throughout a service, to select some particular parts, for one tenth performed with Spirit is worth a million of mere words and formal genuflections: but then the omission of the rest must be really owing to inability and human infirmity, not to laziness; for nine parts in ten will not suffice, if it were feasible to have gone through the whole.

9. From what has been said it appears, that increase of grace and virtue are the proper and primary objects of prayer, because having a natural tendency to procure them, but not to procure anything else: for prayer, as observed before, being a pouring out our sentiments and desires before God, the awe of his presence upon our imagination, will give them a purity and sincerity they had not during our commerce in the world, and by putting our minds frequently into that posture of desire and sentiment, we shall bring them by degrees to fall habitually thereinto of their own accord; just as a man may bring his feet to turn outwards spontaneously by often holding them in that position.

Nevertheless, prayer may very usefully be preferred for externals; for though it has no influence to procure them, it may sometimes procure what will procure them. By praying for health, for success in our callings, and for deliverance from evils, we shall impress upon our minds a sense of those blessings coming from God, who will be propitious according as we conduct ourselves before him: and this will engage us to an industry, a sobriety, a vigilance and prudence, that may not improbably bring us into possession of the things we desire: so that health, success, and deliverance will be the real effects of our prayer. If we pray for the peace, the good order, and the prosperity of our country, we shall become more sedulous and hearty in doing our parts towards promoting them, and help to inspire the like sentiments among our neighbours: whereby, it is not impossible that our country may really be the better for our praying.

In like manner, whatever we pray for with a reflection obvious to the very heathens, that God will grant nothing to the prayers of the idle and the negligent, we shall obtain so much as our own right disposition of mind can contribute towards attaining it, and this is much more conducive to the procurement of good things without us, than people are commonly aware of: for if the wants, vexations, and troubles we bring upon ourselves by our own misconduct were subtracted, I believe few of us would find cause to complain at what remained. Yet our prayers are not certainly lost, although the diligence and management they nourish in us should prove of none avail towards supplying our wants, because they may furnish us with what will answer our purpose as well without.

Suppose a man having none other subsistence than ten acres of land which are worth him five pounds a year, and of so infirm a body that he cannot possibly earn a farthing more by his skill or labour; if upon finding himself in want of necessaries he should pray to have his land increased, but instead of that it should please God miraculously so to fertilize his land, that it should yield him a hundred pounds a year, everybody would allow this to be a full answer to his petition: for however he might express himself, it was not the quantity of land, but the income arising from it that he desired. In like manner when we ask for externals, it is not the bare having them in custody, but the ease and pleasure to be received from them, that is properly the object of our desire; and we ask the things for sake of the enjoyment we expect they will give us in the possession: there-

fore, if God refuse us them, but so fructify the soil of our hearts, as that it shall yield the same income of enjoyment we could have expected from the addition of them, it is a complete answer to our petition. For it has been shown, in a Chapter of the First Volume upon the Ultimate Good, that it lies solely in satisfaction or complacence of mind; all other things are good or valuable only in proportion as they tend nearly or remotely to yield us an income of that.

Now prayer devoutly performed with due resignation to the Will and Wisdom of God, and a persuasion that he orders all things for the best, will make us better pleased with the blessings he vouchsafes us, better contented under his dispensations, and more hopeful to draw some good profit from them: whereby we may receive greater satisfaction and complacence of mind, and pass our days more happily, than we might have done had the petition been granted in the form it was offered. Therefore I can so far allow confidence of obtaining a favourable answer to our request, as an ingredient in the faith rendering it effectual: for the devout worshipper may be assuredly confident of receiving the thing he asks in value, though perhaps not in specie.

Not that I would give into the stoical extravagance of expecting to do everything by the temper and disposition of the mind, so as that this should always keep us easy and happy under the severest pressure of wants, distresses, and pains; for God has not made such firmness practicable in this imperfect state of mortality. He has given us wants and natural appetites with various means of gratification, wherein he has placed a considerable part of our enjoyment in this life, and has made our desires the avenues leading into prudence, industry, sociableness, and many other virtues; there is nothing, then, blameable in pursuing our conveniences and accommodations by all awful and innocent methods; but the principal fund of our happiness must spring from the state of our minds; this then we ought to improve with all possible diligence, for it will make us relish our pleasures while we have them, and prove a sure refuge in disappointment when all other things fail. Nor need we scruple to make externals the subject of our petitions; for if offered in sincerity and pureness of heart, we have ground to hope assuredly that God will either give us the good things seeming requisite to our well-being, or if he judges otherwise, will enable us to enjoy our minds with peace and tranquillity without them, or at least make our pressure the passage to some greater advantage.

10. Upon the same grounds is founded the duty of praying for others, for their deliverance from wants and distresses, for their patience under them, their drawing some good profit from them, for their health, their improvement, their success in lawful undertakings, for the peace and prosperity of our country, for the advancement of sound Religion and practical Philosophy, those hasteners of the coming of that grand blessing to the human species, the kingdom of the just, which is the kingdom of God, wherein his Will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. For though we cannot move God, nor retard, or hasten, or make the least alteration in his measures, nor influence the hearts of other persons by our devotions, yet we may move and work alterations in ourselves thereby. And the tenor of our minds may be of greater service to other people than most of us are careful enough to observe, for from the desires of the heart the actions proceed: according as that stands more humanely, benevolently, and piously disposed, we shall apply with better inclination to assist all we can, as well in their distresses as their successes: and when it is remembered how great a force

there is in sympathy, we shall see that they may catch a spark of industry, of prudence, and patience from us to their own emolument; at least they will receive a considerable comfort and pleasure on finding us take a sincere part in either fortune befalling them.

Neither are our good wishes unavailing to the community, as they prompt us to contribute our share towards promoting the prosperity we wish for. We are all members of the community, whose good is advanced by the united efforts of its constituents; nor is the most inconsiderable among us of no consequence, if it be no more than to abstain from doing mischief by his private passions and indiscretion. If the politic, the aspiring, the hotheaded, the discontented, and the wanton, had not too sovereign a contempt of prayer ever to join in it devoutly or otherwise than for form and fashion sake, I think there could not be such unwillingness to part with power nor greediness to get into it, such struggles and party animosities, such virulence and obloquy in declamatory prose or scandalous versification as we are now-a-days pestered with: however, I cannot but congratulate my country, for that I believe those evils have never run shorter lengths in any age or nation, than our own.

Then for that grand interest of the species, the progress of perfection in human nature and bringing forward the kingdom of the just, the seat of this I apprehend lies not in external nature but in the hearts of men; and it has been shown in the Chapter on Divine Economy, how Providence carries on this great work by a multitude of operators concurring in their several stations thereto: but we cannot better qualify ourselves for performing our part than by an increase of our Charity, which our prayers are particularly efficacious to strengthen in us, so that we may be sure thereby of advancing one person somewhat nearer towards perfection, and have a chance of advancing many more by our example and sympathy. For while praying for the good of others or the advancement of true Religion, we cannot in reference to the Divine Majesty, then fully striking upon our imagination, but heartily wish and desire what we pray for, which will gradually bring the like heartiness to be habitual and practical: and it has been observed in former places, that if a hearty and judicious Charity were once become universal among mankind, that alone would suffice to restore a Paradise upon Earth.

Hence may be seen the foundation there is in reason and nature of that injunction to pray for our enemies, and those that despitefully use us and persecute us, because by so doing we shall preserve our universal Charity unimpaired, our opposition will not be enmity, nor rancour, nor resentment, but unwelcome necessity, nor proceed further than prudence and self-defence require: we shall continue ready to do them all the good offices consistent with our own just rights, and the rights of others to whom they may be dangerous: we shall not resent private injuries whenever greater inconveniences and disorders would ensue therefrom to the public: and should be able, if our considerate judgment should so pronounce expedient, to turn the right cheek to him that has smitten the left, and give up our coat also to one that has taken away our cloak.

11. I am apt vehemently to suspect that the prayers of our Church frequently concluding through or for the sake of Jesus Christ, gives an idea to many persons that God has no immediate regard for us at all, but bestows his blessings purely to gratify his Son, upon those to whom he has

happily taken a liking: and that by the use of that name we may move him to do a thing he was indifferent to before. I need not take pains to show how repugnant this notion is to reason and rational Faith: neither do I believe it was in the thoughts of the compilers of our Liturgy, nor designed to be inculcated in the Scriptures. I own indeed there are several expressions which seem to look strongly that way, and perhaps it might be necessary that such opinion should be connived at for the Jews, who looked for a temporal deliverer to rescue them by his might and prowess, or for the gross-minded Gentiles, who could take their apprehensions of the Almighty only from the likeness of earthly princes, in order to lead them by the avenue of their own conceptions into an expectation of benefit from the Gospel.

But for such as have ears to hear, they are told expressly, that God so loved the world he gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins: so the Redemption was a joint act of love in the Father as well as in the Son. And he is all along represented as the God of love, sending his sunshine and his rain upon the just and the unjust, long-suffering and merciful, ready to forgive, unwilling the sinner should perish, but that he should turn from his evil ways and live. This being his character, there is no doubt he is always ready to give his creatures all the good things proper for them, and consistent with the order of government respecting his spiritual Natures established in perfect Wisdom, of his own mere motion, without needing an intercession prompting him thereto. Besides that, however we may understand the distinction of persons in the Godhead, they can never be imagined so different in temper and character, as that one should take a liking to objects indifferent to the other, or one should importune for things not already judged proper by the perfect Wisdom of the other.

But the Gospel teaches that Christ is the way and the life, for no man can come to the Father unless through the Son: he came from God to direct us by his doctrines and assist us by his institutions, and goes before to lead us by his example in the road which is the natural avenue to the divine blessings: therefore he is styled the Intercessor, Mediator, and Agent going between God and Man, as I have endeavoured already to explain in § 25, of the Chapter on the Christian Scheme. But then we must travel the road ourselves, or shall receive no benefit from the Intercession, which operates no otherwise than by bringing us into the way: for even his death and passion will avail only such, who strive to imitate his endurance in a good cause, to crucify the lusts of their flesh, the pride and indolence, and unruly passions of their heart, and to subdue the carnal or sensual part under subjection to the spiritual or rational.

Therefore I apprehend we are not warranted to expect that Christ will do anything for us at a distance in heaven, nor otherwise than by the instrumentality of our own powers towards bringing our hearts into that frame which may qualify them for reception of those blessings, that God in his Wisdom and Goodness has prepared for his creatures. And by the phrase Through Jesus Christ, is to be understood that we hope to obtain the things we sue for by the way he has opened to us for arriving at them: and for his sake, implies that God will give them to us in consideration of our employing the means he has put into our hands for attaining them. So that those expressions are of similar import with that ending one of the sentences in the Lord's Prayer, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us: or something in the nature of an oath, as if

we should say, So help me God in my present wants as I shall strive faithfully to persevere in the tenor of sentiment and conduct prescribed me, and avail myself of the aids afforded me in the Gospel.

I do not mean to condemn the literal sense of Intercession in persons who cannot understand any other, for there are many among our vulgar of as gross conceptions as the ancient Jew or the Gentile; and as there is meat for men and milk for babes, we must allow every one to take what is most suitable to his digestion: therefore I would not wish anybody to disturb himself that he cannot fully enter into the explanation offered above, for whoever applies to his devotions with the purest ideas he is capable of entertaining, performs them well, and will receive all the benefits from them promised in the Scriptures. But I think the literal sense ought not to be countenanced, much less encouraged, in whomsoever is susceptible of the other: because experience testifies into what mischiefs it has unwarily led mankind. For if God had no bowels of compassion for us since the disobedience of Adam, yet might be moved to give us eternal happiness by the Intercession of his Son: the Son too, after we had forfeited his favour by actual transgressions, might re-instate us upon the recommendation of St. Peter, or St. Mary, or St. Bennet Sheerhog, or St. Vedast, alias Foster, or some other prime favourite: but if we happen to be strangers to the foresaid Saints, still it is likely they, in imitation of their Master's example, will take us under protection, if we can get some priest or holy man upon earth to present our petition. Thus have men been led to imagine, that in the Court of Heaven, as in some Italian Court, points are carried by interest and favour: and thus Religion has been turned into an infamous trade.

12. But though we have now in these countries gotten rid of those corrupt excrescences, yet there are others which sometimes creep out from the vulgar idea of Christ doing anything for us while we lie still, or otherwise than by enabling us to do what we could not have done of ourselves: for dependence on him and the practice of good works being promiscuously inculcated as the necessary steps to salvation, many are apt to place them out of their proper order, reckoning that the first which ought to be esteemed the last. They apprehend good works no otherwise beneficial than by giving them a claim to the protection of Christ, by whose sole operation the mercy of God is turned upon them. He has commanded righteousness, and declared he will love those who seek it, so they must be righteous only to please him and gain the effects of his love: whence they value themselves upon their orthodoxy, and place salvation in externals, thinking themselves good Christians in proportion to the staunchness of their belief, or assiduities and fervours in their devotion. Whereas whoever consults the Scriptures will find by the whole tenor of them, that Christ came to deliver us from sin, but from punishment only in consequence of the other, by delivering us from that which would incur it.

I am far from laying a stress upon the merit of good works: they are generally though not always efficacious to our better accommodation and enjoyment in this transitory life, but have none effect upon our future interests, otherwise than by strengthening the virtues wherein the health and vigour of our spiritual body consists. Now virtue lies solely in the mind; it is an habitual disposition in the heart or imagination to follow readily the dictates of judgment or understanding, and is the same while lying dormant unexercised as when exemplified in outward acts: but our actions constantly flow from the dispositions of the heart, therefore good works are

the surest evidence of our possessing the virtues, and if we fail in the performance of them according to our skill, ability, and opportunites, however fondly we have flattered ourselves, we may be sure of falling deficient in the particular virtues prompting thereto. But religious virtues are not such, while remaining in speculative theorems, nor until taking strong hold on the imagination and become habitual and practical persuasions, comprehended under the name of a saving Faith: which, as I have endeavoured to show in the Chapter upon that article, consists in a quick sensibility of distant good and evil, equally with the present, and in possessing just and lively sentiments of the Power, the Wisdom, the Goodness, the Holiness, the Equity of God, and his government of the Universe together with all things great and small contained therein: from whence will naturally grow a soothing unshaken Hope, a thorough satisfaction in the lot of our existence, and an unreserved Charity to our fellow-creatures as connected with ourselves in one general interest.

This I apprehend figured in Scripture style by coming to the Father, living to God, being his child, or becoming one with him. Had we our rational faculties in full perfection and our sensitive under entire command, as they are believed to have been in Adam before his fall, we might perhaps attain this saving Faith without foreign aid, and then should need no Intercession to bring down that happiness which would follow therefrom in the course of nature established by our Almighty Governor. But every man's experience, who consults it fairly, will testify, that this is not the case, and it is the doctrine of our Church that we cannot rectify the disorder in our internal machinery by our own management, nor without aid of the rules prescribed, and the remedies dispensed in the Gospel: for no man can come to the Father unless through the Son; we must become incorporated with our elder brother to become children of God, and must live to Christ before we can live to Him. Yet the bare conviction of our understanding that such rules and remedies are necessary, will not urge us to apply them without a firm persuasion of mind of their efficacy, nor can this be generated without a full dependence upon the skill and ability of the prescriber.

So that Faith in Christ is effectual only to make us follow his regimen, and the regimen beneficial only for the health whereto it will restore us: for if it were possible for a man to perform all the peculiar duties of Christianity without performing those which are not peculiar, I shall not scruple to question whether he would be ever the better for so doing. But Faith in Christ is called a saving Faith, because being the sole and certain avenue to that which is properly so: therefore the conclusion of our prayers operates in the same manner as the other parts of them, not by moving God or Christ to make them more favourably disposed towards us, or prevail on them to do anything further than they have already done on our behalf, but by bringing ourselves into a frame of mind capable of receiving benefit from the provisions they have made for our use, and impressing deeper upon our hearts a dependence upon the all-sufficiency of our Saviour, which will urge a greater attention and diligence in applying the means he has prescribed for attainment of a saving Faith.

13. Prayer is commonly parted into four kinds, Petition, Confession, Intercession, and Thanksgiving: I have already said enough of the three former, and need only now add a word upon the last. This deserves the name of a Divine Service more properly than any of the others, for we seem directly to serve God herein, and not ourselves: we approach the throne of Glory not with our troubles and wants, nor those of one another, nor yet with

the mortifying prospect of our frailties and corruptions; we come in joy and alacrity of heart to offer our tribute of grateful praise, that only return in our power to make for all his manifold blessings.

And to render the tribute complete, it behoves us to recollect as many of the blessings poured out upon us as we can, our being, our health, our faculties of body and mind, our accommodations, our conveniences and pleasures of life, the gifts of nature and fortune, those we share in common with our fellow-creatures, with the species, with the community, with our friends, and those we possess in particular ourselves; exemptions from danger, escapes from mischief, deliverance from troubles, what progress we have made in any virtue or useful improvement, what opportunities we have employed well, and what favourable accidents have befallen us. But then our sacrifice must be of the choice firstlings of the flock, without spot or blemish of vanity or flattery, but the spontaneous produce of the heart: for a force put upon the mind here will vitiate the performance more than in any other kind. The praise must be a voluntary oblation, not a grudging payment, for God loveth a cheerful giver, more especially in offerings made to himself: he searches into the heart, and is not to be imposed upon so far as to accept whatever does not come freely from thence.

There are some zealots who would have us always kiss the rod of affliction, and thank God for every exercise of it upon us. I do not deny that afflictions work to our benefit, and have taken pains in the course of this work to show that they do so, therefore whenever we can discern the particular benefit accruing therefrom, we are in the right to be thankful for them; but this is very rarely the case, and there are many other things we may be convinced in our judgment are for our good, yet if they be not apparently so to our imagination, they are no proper topics of thanksgiving. I have shown in the proper place, that our tastes and inclinations fluctuate, we do not always relish the same pleasures with equal glee, nor value the good things we possess always at the same rate: but we ought to take the matter of our thanksgiving from those objects which then most strongly touch our hearts; for to thank God for what we are not sincerely glad at possessing, is arrant flattery and compliment, it is telling him he is good, when we are not sensible of his goodness ourselves.

The tribute of praise and acknowledgment is undoubtedly a duty expected from us, but we cannot pay it well out of duty: the thought of obligation can serve no farther than to put us upon searching in our reflection for proper topics of thankfulness, but we must have some nobler principle to actuate us in the performance. And surely among the innumerable blessings we receive, it cannot be hard for any man to pick out such as at that instant he may feel a sensible joy and hearty gratitude in reflecting on. But though the consciousness of having done well in any part of our conduct is a very reasonable matter of thanksgiving, because ascribing the whole glory to God, and the sense of blessings, is strengthened by contemplating the want of them elsewhere, yet we must take great heed that the comparison be made upon things, not upon persons, for this would lead us insensibly to assume the glory to ourselves.

The fondness for excelling is a wily enchantress never sufficiently to be guarded against, it is apt to insinuate into all our actions and all our thoughts, and too frequently even into our religious exercises: but vanity is the worst ingredient we can mingle among our offerings, it is worse than fear or obligation, for they only render them insipid, but this, like dead flies in a pot of ointment, turns the sweet-smelling savour into a noisome

stench. The Pharisee, who fasted thrice a week, paid tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and gave alms of all he possessed, if he believed those things duties, was very proper in giving thanks for having performed them, had his joy arisen from the benefit they were of to himself: but it seems his joys sprung from the pride of telling God how much superior he was to the wicked Publican: therefore went down to his house less justified than the other, who had only smitten his breast, and said, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14. There is a seeming contradiction among the directions given in the Scriptures upon this subject: for we are warned against the Battology or vain repetitions of the heathens, yet on the other hand commanded to pray without ceasing, to continue instant in prayer, and expect to prevail by our importunity, God being likened to a man who would not rise out of his warm bed until teased into a compliance by incessant knockings. Wherein we cannot suppose any variety either in the matter or manner of the application, for the person knocking wanted only one thing, a loaf of bread, nor does it appear that he played any change of tunes in drumming against the door. But whenever there are seeming contradictions, we may consider the two branches of them as intended to guard us against two opposite extremes; for so the exhortations to industry, and to take no thought for the morrow, are levelled against the contrary vices of idleness and anxious solicitude: and if we recollect what has been argued above concerning the effect of prayer being worked solely upon ourselves, not upon the Almighty, it may help to discover what those extremes are.

For while we conceit ourselves able to move the Heavenly Powers, we shall be apt to imagine the effect owing to the vehemence and repetition of the impulse, not to the temper and disposition of mind wherein we gave it: just as a man who goes to push a stone along, it is no matter whether he does it in anger, or fear, or wantonness, or out of obligation, the stone will move according to the strength and number of his thrusts, not according to the state of his mind. And so the Papists seem to apprehend the matter, for they believe that twenty Ave Marias run off without any devotion, like twenty shillings dropped carelessly into a man's hand, are worth just as much again as ten. Or if we look upon the manner of performing them as material, still while retaining the opinion of their changing the disposition of God towards us, we shall value ourselves thereupon, and claim the title of obedient servants and very righteous people for our assiduities and devotion. Or if we get rid of that notion, but have none of their operating upon ourselves, we may regard them as superstitious and foolish, to be complied with only now and then for fashion sake, and to avoid giving offence.

Whereas if we look for the benefit of our prayers in the effect they work upon ourselves, and reflect on their manner of operation, we shall see sufficient reason for being assiduous and importunate in them; because else they cannot produce an habitual and permanent change in the mind. I have observed in a former place, that there are two ways to happiness, one by procuring the objects we desire, the other by bringing desire to fix upon the objects in our power, or that are proper for us, or upon courses of conduct conducive to our benefit: the former depends upon fortune and external circumstances, the latter lies more under our own management; and herein consists the art we are to learn from Religion and Morality. I have likewise shown that desires have their seat in the imagination, for what we know very well in the judgment of our understanding to be good, does not

touch us in the expectation, nor give us a pleasurable sense in the possession, until we have gotten an appetite towards it, which appetite, if it be not among those given by nature, can be acquired only by habit.

Now prayer has a natural efficacy to raise a desire for the things we pray for, and a relish to the objects then holden under contemplation, but it must be by continual bending that desire and sentiment can be brought to remain in their proper ply, which will give us a permanent habitual, happy temper of mind, rendering us willingly obedient to the Will of God, easy and satisfied within ourselves, prudent in our conduct, and heartily disposed towards one another. Therefore we need not regard style nor variety of expression, any farther than we find requisite upon our own account to keep our reverence and attention alive: for whatever, and how lately soever repeated, we can offer with unabated vigour and earnestness, will answer the purpose as well as if it were new dressed and furbished up.

Hence appears there is no irreverence in a common form of liturgy: for we must not expect to please God by the novelty and copiousness of our diction, but by the sincerity and heartiness of our application. Then as most prayers begin with an exordium alike suitable to introduce deprecation, confession, intecession, petition, or thanksgiving, and the gifted in extempore prayers are extremely slow in their pronunciation, I should think the hearer must lose several minutes in expectance before he can know the proper posture to cast his mind into, preparatory for what follows.

15. Nevertheless, how little ground soever there may be, either in reason or Scripture, to believe seriously that we can move God, it may be serviceable to take up such an idea for the time while employed in our devotions, as it will help us considerably in the due performance of them. For as observed in former places, we find it many times convenient to conceive of things otherwise than we know them to be; we commonly apprehend the Sun moving from East to West, though in our considerate judgment we are convinced to the contrary; we give way to a temporary persuasion of the transactions being real as we see represented in a play, or described in a poem or a novel, without which we could receive neither pleasure nor instruction therefrom; Tully directs the orator to possess his imagination strongly with the cause being his own, or he will not be able to plead it effectually; and he that enters upon a difficult undertaking, will be more likely to succeed for believing that he shall: in like manner by putting on a temporary persuasion of wresting a favour from God we may be encou raged to apply more strenuously, and shall work a stronger impression upon our minds.

And this temporary persuasion is so necessary as to make it expedient for the vulgar, or those who live almost wholly by imagination and very little by understanding, to indulge in them a permanent persuasion of the like nature, rather than they should be wanting in the temporary: for they will see no absurdities flowing therefrom, and so cannot be hurt by it, unless misled by designing or enthusiastic persons. But for such as have any command over their imagination, and are able to make the distinction, considering the dangers before-mentioned appendant to the notion of prevailing upon God to alter his measures or his disposition towards us, it is better they should cast that notion aside as soon as they come out from their devotions: that they may not regard them as virtues, but rather as means prescribed by their Saviour for the attainment of virtue. Yet even in that light they may rejoice at having performed them well, as a man may rejoice at having gained something that he can turn to his advantage: still esti-

mating their condition, not by their religious exercises, but by the habits and sentiments of mind they possess, which are best evidenced and strengthened by works, but by divine services only in failure of sufficient opportunities for performing good works.

They may then escape the danger of being righteous overmuch, which can only happen by placing righteousness in that which it is not, for it is impossible to be really and truly righteous overmuch: and so it is to live too well, but by living well is commonly understood eating high and plentifuily, and in that sense it is certain that many live too well, so as to hurt their health and fill their bodies with humours and distempers. But if it be said that our spiritual food is of too pure a nature ever to surfeit, this I shall not dispute, but then our food does not consist in acts of devotion, for if we will imitate our Saviour, our meat and drink ought to be doing the Will of God: so that the externals of Religion are not our food but our spiritual physic, necessary in this fallen state to correct the vicious humours in our constitution, and bring our internal organs into a proper tone for digesting their natural food. But everybody knows physic may be overdone, and it may be misapplied, as it certainly is when the timorous and low-spirited are driven into perpetual self-denials, fastings, and humiliations.

Therefore if we consider prayer as a remedy in the spiritual dispensary, though no part of it ought to be admitted in due proportion, yet we shall see cause to prescribe the four several species of it more copiously for particular patients: confession for the proud, the sanguine, and the pleasure hunters: petition for the thoughtless, and the worldly-minded; intercession for the selfish, the ill-natured, and the passionate; and thanksgiving for the fearful, the melancholy, and the discontented. This last may be thought an improper application, for where shall the discontented find any matter for praise? I expect they will be at a loss at first, but after some practice, beginning with evils that might have befallen worse than those they complain of, and noting well in memory whatever touches them at any time, they will perceive the list increase surprisingly, and soon discover many things to rejoice at and be thankful for, which they could not have thought of before.

But though I would have every man be so far his own physician as to observe the success of his remedies, yet he ought not to rely solely upon experience, but consult the written and received rules, and take the recommendation of persons who in his best judgment he sees reason to confide in: for it is not uncommon with medicines of the alterative kind, as are all those we have been speaking of, to take good effect though the patient himself does not perceive it. However, let him beware of Quacks, lest they draw him in by their vehemence and positiveness to place a faith in their nostrums and panaceas, as efficacious to cure all distempers, past, present, and to come.

16. There is another religious performance, which if it cannot take rank as a species of prayer, yet bears a near affinity therewith, because operating in the same manner, viz. by impressing the ideas it contains more strongly upon the imagination; and this is, Singing. It answers more particularly to that species called Thanksgiving: therefore St. Paul directs, if any be sad, let him pray; if joyful, let him sing psalms. We have observed that importunity and repetition work more upon the imagination, than argument: now in Singing, the words are drawn out, and the same thoughts made to dwell upon the mind longer than in any other way. Therefore you find

that in clubs and parties they have their songs, which are known to encourage them greatly in their several ways of thinking, especially among the populace.

It was much used by the primitive Christians, by the first Reformers, and in the beginnings of most sects: but what vitiates it in the established Churches is, the fondness for an exquisite taste in Music, which wholly draws off all attention from the thought to the sound, and renders it impracticable for the vulgar to join in the Chorus. Go to an Italian Opera, and you will hear the singers so clip and mangle their words, that, without a book in your hand, you will lose even the little sense they contain. Not but that good Music may be employed to give strength to the expressions, as witness the Coronation Anthem, the Messiah, and other of Handel's performances: but there are few of the composers who know how to do this, or even endeavour it. Besides that those pieces ought to be executed *by* good and skilful voices, who cannot be followed by a common congregation.

The songs inspiring party zeal and the spirit of drinking, are generally very bad music, badly executed, being rather roars or squalls than songs: yet have they the full weight upon the company. I doubt not that many a jolly toper has bawled out, the Soph he is immortal, and never can decay, for how should he return to dust, who daily wets his clay? until he has sung himself into a full pursuasion of that witticism being a solid argument, which would justify him in his assiduities at the bottle. And though the Quaker never sings professedly, yet the whine and awkward cadence and see-saw action, wherewith the spirit vents itself in his sermons, may be called a bastard-singing: and perhaps that is all there is affecting in them. Thus it appears by manifold experience, that singing even of the most hideous kind is a powerful engine for working sentiments into the mind. I never was a singer myself, so can speak only upon observation of things around; and I think it manifest from thence, that singing, judiciously applied, might be turned to excellent service.

It is our business to study human nature, by what media it is affected, and in what manner they severally touch it. In matters relative to our own conduct, we must consult our own temperament and constitution, but when the public is concerned, regard ought to be had to human nature in general: nor may we pretend to faint away at the screamings of a country Church, because we happen to have a fine ear, and delicate taste for music. The custom in some places of breeding up a set of singers to perform according to the rules of art, has, I apprehend, proved a greater hindrance than furtherance to devotion; as the rest of the people let them sing by themselves, and attend solely to their quavers, without heeding the substance of what they sing. If they were permitted to sing as long as they pleased after service is over, it might be of good use to withhold such as chose to stay with them from other amusements less suitable to the day. The only help to the congregation seems to be that of an organ, whereon the operator may flourish about as he likes in the symphony, but when he comes to lead the tune, there should be nothing of levity or wantonness, nor affectation to show a nimbleness and dexterity of finger.

In composing manuals of devotion and collections of hymns, regard should be had to the nature of the mind, particularly her sensitive faculty, which is the seat of persuasion; in order to inculcate such sentiments there as may conduce to a happy and useful life. The former is applicable for rectifying our desires, and the latter for those joyful reflections that spring

from religion: but then provision should be made for improving all of them, not confining the thoughts to one, or a few. The Methodists, and others of similar turn, who deal most largely in hymns, lay them all out upon the Redemption: but though this be the principal topic of joyful praise, it is not the only one. They are so zealous for the Son, that they totally overlook the Father: whereas the Son himself has told them that he came not to seek his own glory, but the glory of him that sent him; that he is the way and the life, that is, the way to life, which cannot be attained by saying Lord, Lord, nor unless by coming to the Father. Let them then consider by what sentiments of mind they may come nearest to the Father, what sources of comfort and hope and joy may severally arise from contemplation of the Attributes and government of Providence, and prepare forms for encouraging these in the breast: so that every pious Christian may find a ready help for speeding his approach in that particular track, which, in his present disposition of mind and of external circumstances, he feels himself most apt to pursue.

17. I do not know whether I shall not be counted an old-fashioned-fellow in recommending those unpremeditated addresses to Heaven called ejaculations, especially of the laudatory kind: but I cannot help thinking they contribute greatly to preserve a habit of cheerful piety, to keep the mind serene and easy within itself, to double the relish of our innocent pleasures, and wean us from such as are not quite so. But those exercises must be short, flowing spontaneously from the occasion, not studied nor made a task of: our business is to watch the little emotions in our heart, and encourage, never to force them, nor suffer them to leave a solemnity upon the thoughts or countenance, so as to supply fuel for spiritual vanity, or prove an interruption to other matters in hand.

Profane swearing has a like efficacy, only works the contrary way, and therefore may not improperly be styled ejaculating to the Devil, who is sometimes addressed therein by name: for it helps to confirm an habitual contempt of Religion and all the terms belonging to it, and for that reason I presume was first introduced by such as thought they had too strong a sense of Religion inculcated into them by the nurse and the priest, in order to get rid of it, and must be owned a sovereign remedy for that purpose. For a like reason probably, it was encouraged among the soldiery, because he who is to be afraid of nothing, should learn to fear neither God nor the Devil: and this maxim may be right while courage is understood to be an insensibilty of danger, not a principle of prudence enabling to despise an imminent evil in contemplation of a greater distant good.

If this practice ever did any good, it must be by silencing cant and hypocrisy, and so, like one poison, serving as an antidote to expel another. Nevertheless, as the disciple is taught to imitate the unjust steward in his provident forecast for the future, and the saint may strive to copy the devil in his industry and perseverance; so the pious ejaculator may learn of the common swearer his spontaneity and ease of expression, and his readiness in mingling it among common transactions, without breaking off the train of thought he was engaged in by other business: but I would not have him imitate his vanity, nor aim to be thought a saint as the other does to be thought a wit, by the vehemence and fluency of his performances aided with gestures and turns of the eye respectively suitable to the occasion.

There is another form of devotion, which for the shortness may be reckoned approaching to the ejaculatory kind, called grace at meals: this our forefathers used to regard as a serious affair, but it is now growing obso-

lete. The master of a family, or parson, where there is one present, mumbles over a few words which nobody can hear, as if he was ashamed of his office; the ladies adjust their dress, the citizen eyes the smoking viands, the beau pretends to rise from his chair just when it is over, the servants clatter the plates and glasses, everybody looks upon it as an antiquated ceremony still kept up they do not know why, only because they were used to it. When a company of young fellows get together, who in all ages and countries have ever been wiser than their fathers, they despise it as a ridiculous form. In polite assemblies, gentlemen of fortune and knowledge of the world scorn submitting to vulgar customs whereof they see no use.

But why should it be deemed of no use, because so frequently none is made of it? and this may be presumed owing to their looking for the use in the wrong place, namely, in making the victuals more nutritive or assisting our powers of digestion, which savouring too strongly of the marvellous, I do not wonder they reject it. Whereas this exercise tends to cherish the habit of referring those things to the gift of Providence which we receive from natural causes: that main support both of Philosophy and Religion, without which the former would degenerate into Atheism, and the latter become all miracle, occult quality, and superstition. And since the continual converse among sensible objects, which we are obliged to keep up by our bodily wants and occasions, draws us unwarily into a forgetfulness of intellectual truths; it must be of no small service to break the attraction by casting a glance beyond the stream of second causes up to their original fountain, at the opening and close of every meal. Surely there are no pleasures of company so precious, but we might afford a little quarter minute from them for this service.

But religious thoughts are such stiff and heavy things that people are afraid, lest, if they suffer them to possess their minds for a quarter of a minute, they shall not get rid of them again in a quarter of an hour, nor be able to resume their gaiety. If any find inconveniences of this sort, it is rather owing to the stiffness of their faculties than unweildiness of the objects: therefore they have the greater need to practise an exercise which will bring their mental organs more supple. We are all extremely fond of having our will; but the greatest and most valuable command is that over our thoughts, enabling us to think of what we will, and when we will, and as long as we will.

18. In the Chapter on Reason in the First Volume, I have compared understanding and Imagination to a rider and his horse. The complete horseman is master of all the paces of his beast, can turn him to right or left, put him suddenly into a round trot or gallop, and stop him again in an instant; he may let him sometimes prance and caper and curvet when he judges proper, but never against his liking: so it is the perfection of reason to have the inferior faculties under control, to put imagination into any train, and resume the former again at pleasure; there are not wanting examples of such pliancy of imagination among mankind.

When Counsel at the bar are in the middle of an interesting argument, their Crier calls out, Make way for the Grand Jury: the orator suddenly breaks off, jokes and laughs among his acquaintance, and as soon as the bills are delivered, and the Foreman has made his bow, instantly resumes his thread of argument where he had left off. A man expert in business being called out of a room full of giggling girls, may talk seriously of important affairs, give his orders completely, and then upon his return enter fully into the merriment going forward. We are told Cæsar could dictate

to three amanuenses together, in doing which he must cast his attention to and fro successively between the trains belonging to three different subjects. So that it is possible to gain the art of grasping our ideas without letting them grasp upon the mind, or take such gluey hold as that we cannot wipe off at pleasure: and though we must not expect to run such lengths as Cæsar, it will be worth while to make what progress we can, especially with respect to the most serious subjects. For since our condition of life necessitates us to be perpetually conversant amongst other matters of a very different kind, we shall have the more time for applying effectually to both, the less we lose in the passage from one to the other, and shall be able to intermingle them more frequently without damage or hindrance to one another: whereby all parts of our conduct, as well the trivial as the momentous, like the main timbers and embellishments of a building, may become one whole, constructed upon a uniform and consistent plan.

But we shall never compass this without learning to think easily on religious topics; for laborious tasks cannot be gone upon without painful preparation, nor will presently leave the reflection at liberty for anything else: and one would imagine, there should need little exhortation to think easily upon Religion with our compatriots, who are so fond of doing everything easily, and value themselves so much upon it. Only the ease they admire is not that arising from expertness, but from negligence and averseness to trouble: the ease of the idle boy who slubbers over his lesson, not that of the proficient who has it current at his fingers' ends. They follow the present impulse of fancy or gale of fashion in everything, and this they call moving with ease; never considering there is a wide difference between doing things easily, and doing things that anybody can easily do: whereas the true masterly ease is the child of application and practice, nor will ever be attained by him who resolves to do nothing he cannot easily do.

And this art of performing the most serious offices easily, and yet effectually, would be very serviceable for the godly to study, as it will clear them from affectation of godliness: which is the grand obstacle against its spreading, because rendering it distasteful to others. For affectation is always a stiff and forced thing, the very reverse to easiness: therefore whoever would gain this quality must attend solely for the time to the thing he is about, assuming no countenance nor gestures that do not flow naturally from it, having nothing of other people in his thoughts. For though he may wish to cast a good influence upon them, it would be improper to take pains upon that account: he had better leave example and sympathy to their chance of what effect they will work upon the by-standers. For virtue, like other beauties, is ever most amiable when appearing unconscious of her charms; and does greatest execution, when most undesigning.

19. Having examined the nature of divine services, and found their efficacy lies in impressing salutary dispositions and sentiments in the heart or imagination, it is obvious that an operation upon that faculty may be aided by forms, ceremonies, external appearance, example, and sympathy: whence springs the expedience of public services, wherein a whole congregation joining in the same form of worship, may do their work more effectually than they could have done singly by themselves. For if persons in the same way of thinking upon secular affairs fortify themselves in their sentiments, and become better united by assembling frequently together, why should not the like effect flow naturally from religious assemblies were they resorted to in the same view, and not out of mere custom or obligation?

But if there were not certain stated times appointed for assembling, how should each man know when the rest were disposed to assemble? Nor perhaps would they ever stand so disposed, or turn their thoughts upon their spiritual concerns at all, without the idea of an obligation urging them to it at particular seasons: for it is well known how backward people are to find a time of their own accord for matters of business not of diversion, which they apprehend might be done at any other time. Therefore the command to keep holy every seventh day had a rational foundation in human nature: not that there was an intrinsic sacredness in the day, which then could not have been changed from the seventh to the first, for the alteration was not made by divine command issued from the mouth of our second lawgiver, nor recorded in the Gospel, but by unanimous consent of the first Christians probably to overthrow the superstitious notion of an intrinsic virtue in the day.

I make no doubt that worship performed with the same sincerity, heartiness, and devotion on a Thursday would be as effectual to all intents and purposes as on a Sunday: but it is not to be supposed that a man who neglects it at the appointed time, will perform it at any other. And a cessation from all common business, other than works of real necessity and charity, on that day, is likewise requisite as men are constituted: for else they would be perpetually finding excuses for non-attendance on their religious exercises, from avocations and impediments unexpectedly falling in their way. Besides that very few have such a compliant imagination as recommended in the last section, which will bear turning suddenly into the most opposite trains of thinking, without leaving a tincture of those engaged in before, or a hankering after those to follow next in succession: therefore it is absolutely necessary to keep clear of all worldly attachments, that their minds may stand ready to fall into the posture proper for the business of the day. At least I would not advise anybody to indulge himself in taking liberties with Sundays, until he can say a grace with full devotion, in the midst of gaieties immediately before and after, without suffering a single idea of them to intrude during the few moments of his address to Heaven.

Nevertheless, if any man imagines Sundays of no use to himself, for that he can think of Religion as much as becomes a gentleman without them, yet it is an unpardonable negligence to take no concern for other folks. People are apt to cry, What shall we be the better for going to Church, or nodding over a musty book in the evening instead of taking an innocent game at cards: but they should go on to ask one little question further, what hurt may we do our neighbours, or the family? If I stay away from Church, I may probably apply to my Chapters, which often turn upon matters not wholly unsuitable for a Sunday's employment: if my neighbour the Cobbler stays away, he goes to the alehouse, an employment less useful than that he follows on his working days; and he thinks he copies my example herein, because we both agree in that circumstance of absenting from the public service.

For the generality can look no further than to the outward behaviour, and think a conformity in that necessarily infers a thorough conformity of character: therefore it behoves us to remember St. Paul's maxim, All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient, and apply it to the present occasion; if what I am about to do be ever so harmless for me, yet while it may offend my brother, I will refrain. Hence appears that, to use the softest name, it is a high degree of inconsiderateness to do or omit anything, whereby Sunday may fall into disregard: for how much soever we may

persuade ourselves a form is needless for us, it is certainly needful for the greater part of mankind, who cannot enter into the reasons of things, but must be led into the substance by means of the form, and will catch at any authority or example of their betters to excuse them from the form, which is irksome to them because they do not discern its relation to the substance.

The cessation from business makes Sunday more improper for a day of jollity to the populace, than any other: for on other days they are restrained from wasting too much of their time by the necessary attendance to their work and professions, and kept in some decorum by persons of sober deportment mingling among them: but on Sundays the serious are all drawn off to attend their devotions; riot and wantonness has no check nor control, but the giddy and the libertine are left to themselves to improve one another in their extravagances. Assemblies of such persons, all in the same way of thinking or rather of thoughtlessness, may be termed anti-divine services: for as I said in the last section of profane swearing compared with ejaculation, they will naturally have an equal influence with the Church services, but working the contrary way, especially since those anti-ejaculations commonly bear a great part in the ceremony. Wherefore it must be expected they will bring upon the frequenters a callousness against all sense of Religion, decency, and order, and fit them for practices most opposite to the Will of God. Accordingly we find that such of our malefactors as make a penitent exit, and will give any true account of themselves, always declare, that the beginning of their ruin was owing to the custom of sabbath-breaking.

20. The same reason that directs to the appointment of times, avails likewise for the appropriation of particular places to divine worship: for as our lives pass in a continual succession of sensitive and reflective ideas, those of both sorts will run together in clusters, and whenever any one of the bundle happens to be excited, the rest will follow in train mechanically. This has been noted by persons of thought and observation in different branches of learning: Mr. Locke has a Chapter upon Association, which whoever takes the trouble to peruse, need not long remain unsatisfied: or if he has the curiosity to see the same subject handled in another manner, he may turn back to my two Chapters upon Combination and Trains in the First Volume. Tulley observes the connection that prevails between places and things deposited in them by the fancy alone, from whence he says Simonides took the hint for striking out his art of memory: by which an orator, taking a large place, containing a multitude of compartments, all perfectly familiar to him, and stationing therein the several materials of his oration, represented by figures or images, in his imagination, they will occur to him again readily in their proper order as wanted. And there is scarce anybody but must have taken notice that on going into a school, a council chamber, a work-shop, or a ball-room, where he has been frequently engaged, he will find his thoughts run spontaneously upon the subjects then used to occupy them in those places.

In like manner, the entrance into a Church, set apart for holy purposes, casts something of an awe and solemnity upon the mind, and would cast more, were people careful to carry none but holy purposes in with them. Therefore a sobriety and decency of deportment is necessay to give the Church its sacred influence: for it does not operate by charm, nor magic, nor occult quality of the building, but by the natural cohesion of sensitive ideas with those of reflection, wherewith they have been constantly united and kept clear of foreign mixtures.

And to our shame it must be owned, that the common people are better behaved in this respect than their superiors, for though they gather in knots in the church-yard to talk of their private affairs, of news, of fairs, of cricket-matches, yet when entered the doors, they throw aside all those amusements, and during their continuance within, preserve at least an appearance of seriousness: whereas the polite vulgar nod, and laugh, and giggle, and fidget to and fro, and whisper, or play antic tricks, and loll about with an affectation of carelessness, resolved to do wrong rather than not assert their liberty of doing what they will: I suppose the difference is owing to the meaner sort standing in awe of the parson, as believing him a great man; but the gentry esteeming themselves above him, stand in none. If this be the case, it shows the greater need of something external to strike a mechanical awe upon persons who have not judgment and discretion enough of their own to keep them in decency and order.

The Church is the most improper place in the world for asserting privileges, and keeping up distinctions: when we come there, we are not 'squires and ladies, shopkeepers, ploughmen, and dairy-maids; we are Christians, and nothing else, all equally entitled to the privileges and benefits of that place, according as we comport ourselves in it. Therefore if I were Pope, I would decree that the poor man should put on his best clothes and the rich man his worst, that there might be the nearer expression of equality. For the same reason I would prohibit all pompous titles and courtly epithets: these things are very proper in the world, to increase our reverence for those whom God has set in authority over us, but let everything be done in its proper place; let us render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. When entered upon sacred ground, we are to pay our court solely to Heaven, not to our fellow servants though placed in office above us: there should be no majesties nor highnesses, nor most noble patrons, reverends nor right reverends, nor by what style or title soever dignified or distinguished; but the same decent plainness of style preserved throughout as in the morning prayer for the clergy and people, and that in the Communion Service entitled for the Church Militant.

It is written, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them: but then the gathering must be in his name, that is under a sense of his immediate presence, or it will have no avail, for that it is which brings him down among us. For God is really and substantially present everywhere, alike intelligent and observant in the common parlour as at the altar, the only difference is made by the state of our internal optics: whenever they are set towards him, he stands before us; when they discern nothing of him, he is absent; and is more or less immediately present, according to the disposition whereinto they are fallen, which disposition the solemnity of the place helps to cast them into.

Wherever devotions can be paid with equal piety of heart, they will be accepted alike: but this cannot be done in all places indiscriminately without some extraordinary circumstance to fix the attention. Suppose a man seized with a distemper that will suffer nothing to pass through him; he has tried several remedies in vain, and given himself over: if at last he finds them begin to take effect, I conceive he may offer as pure and acceptable a thanksgiving from his close-stool, as he ever did from a hassock in his pew: but ordinarily, when there is no uncommon incident to raise a strong emotion upon the mind, it is of great moment what objects are surrounding us.

Let any man try whether he can throw his thoughts into whatever posture he pleases, while kneeling down upon a dunghill in the midst of cows, and hogs, and poultry: therefore he need not despise the aid of external appearances, but let him remember they are only aids; for neither they nor the holy Spirit will do anything for us, they only assist our endeavours in what we strive to do for ourselves.

From what has been said above it appears, there may be a real use in the consecration of Churches: not that it conjures down a supernatural influence into the stones or the mortar, the pulpit or the pews, but because it begins the association between the place and devout ideas to be connected therewith, and serves for a warning to the people to admit no discordant ideas to mingle in the train. Therefore there is an expedience in keeping places once appropriated to sacred uses, from being employed in any others, which would dissolve the association that gives them their salutary influence. After the care I have taken all along to examine everything by nature and natural causes, I shall hope to stand acquitted of all fondness for charm and for the marvellous: yet for all that, should make a scruple to play at cards, join in a country dance, bargain for a horse, or apply to any other profane employment in a Church. Not that I should think my profanation could draw any virtue away from the material or structure of the edifice, or render it less fit for the uses of other persons who should never know what I have been doing: but because I should apprehend it might by natural effect prove an unconsecreating the place with respect to myself, and such as might know of my levities, by making it introduce them mechanically to the reflection at other times, and thereby disassociating those trains it was intended to assist in striking upon the mind.

21. Nor do places alone deserve regard for their natural effect to keep imagination to her proper cue: but likewise things employed in them, vestments, utensils, and stations for performing the several offices. There is a greater exactness requisite upon those articles for a gross and ignorant people, wherefore we find very minute directions given thereupon in the Jewish ceremonial, for which we must presume there was a good reason; for if we will needs deny them to have been of divine appointment but the impositions of Moses, still upon this hypothesis, we must allow him to have been a shrewd and crafty politician, who knew well what he did, and that they would work a strong effect upon the minds of the people, or else he would never have thought it worth while to employ them. But as mankind grows more rational, there is less occasion for application by the senses: perhaps little more is needful for us than such a neatness and decency in external appearances, as may not catch away the attention either by their finery or their slovenliness.

But that objects surrounding have no influence upon the minds of the company, is contrary to experience in the common customs of life: why else have we our dining-rooms, where things are kept a little more spruce and elegant than in the common rooms for family use? A parcel of young folks might once for a frolic be very merry together in a barn hung all round with enormous cobwebs; and even in that case the novelty of the thing and oddity of the furniture might have an effect to increase their merriment: but whoever should make a practice of receiving his company in this equipage, I fear would find the ease of conversation greatly clogged thereby; unless it happened to turn upon rallying him for the peculiarity of his taste. Therefore such as aim solely at the pleasures of conversation, and think

nothing of drawing an admiration of their wealth or elegance of taste, will be careful to exhibit a scene that may neither offend, nor engage the eye.

Not that I mean to condemn all regard to elegance in private houses, but in a Church none other aim is allowable besides that of the benefit of conversation with Heaven: therefore the pomp of Popery is as faulty as a total negligence; it might indeed be very right to answer the purposes intended by it, which were to draw off the veneration for Religion, and turn it into a veneration for the persons officiating. Yet it seems expedient there should be some distinction of dress, and some little reserve of behaviour in those who make professions of dispensing holy things, that the appearance of the person may co-assist with the appearance of the structure. Neither is there a visible impropriety that he should officiate in one garb when acting as the mouth of the congregation to lead them in their adorations in the throne of Glory, and in another when he takes the part of a teacher, employing human reason to expound the sacred oracles, and apply them to our particular uses; for something more solemnity of mind is proper for the people to exercise their Religion, than to learn it.

Nor is the variety in our service without its use for relieving and awakening the attention, for we shall find now and then that some parts of it are long enough to afford time for a comfortable nap. If short forms and ceremonies are so necessary, that Christians of all denominations, even those who affect to declare loudest against them, find it impracticable to do without them: they all have their particular places of worship, which they are careful to keep in what they esteem decency: and their badges of distinction, be it a black cap, a cloak, or coat of a peculiar cut, for their ministry. Even the gifted priestess among the Quakers is known by her green apron; and the brotherhood, though pretending to regard nothing but the inner man, yet are so conscientiously attached to externals, that I suppose they would sooner burn at the stake, than abate an inch of their broad-brimmed hat. In the last century, while a real sanctity was endeavoured to be placed in externals, it was a noble struggle for religious liberty to prevent this notion from spreading among the people by opposing other externals against them: but now nobody retains such notion of their containing an intrinsic virtue, the charge of superstition lies at the door of those who imagine them to carry an intrinsic malignity. For reason pronounces them alike indifferent either way: therefore there is as much superstition to the full in believing the service cannot be read devoutly in a surplice, as that it cannot be so read without one.

22. Having thus essayed an explanation of the manner wherein externals help us forward in the work of Salvation, by assisting to bring the mind into a disposition proper for our most important duties, and so becoming the natural means of grace, the result will be, that a due regard for them deserves to be carefully inculcated, especially upon the young, the giddy, and the ignorant, who will be least capable of understanding their method of operation and wherein their real efficacy lies. Therefore they must be made to prevail in such way as can be effected, the more rational undoubtedly the better: but theory must sometimes give way to practicability, and he that cannot do as he would, must do as he can, rather than do nothing, to attain a good end. Where the natural effects cannot be rendered manifest, God may be represented as giving us arbitrary commands: yet whatever is enjoined by him, or by persons delegated under him to give directions in matters of indifference, may be taken upon credit to carry a real expedience we cannot discern.

If this be too refined and abstruse to sink into some imaginations, recourse must be had directly to command, obligation, and fear: the duties must be enjoined as indispensable, issuing from divine authority, or human derived therefrom, whose commands are not to be disputed nor disobeyed, without drawing down heavy mischiefs upon the transgressor. But then particular care should be taken, both in the choice of things to be enjoined and manner of expression concerning them, to give no handle for apprehending an occult quality inherent in them, or supernatural efficacy annexed to them: it seems the best way to pronounce them in general sacred and necessary, without descending into particular explanations. If any person not content with the general idea of obligation will join thereto a kind of magical virtue, because incapable of conceiving an efficacy any other way, it is not to be avoided, nor will it do him any hurt: for superstition we have said before is relative, and the grossest apprehensions are sufficiently pure to him, whom God has not endued with an understanding capable of better.

Religion will accommodate itself to all capacities, and if not designedly corrupted by politic or enthusiastic mixtures, will turn into nourishment salutary to all constitutions: just as the same bread turns into one kind of flesh in men, another in fowls, and another in fishes, proving nourishment alike to them all. Therefore, to judge soundly of Religion, it is necessary to study human nature, and what effects may be worked thereupon by the several parts of it: but the Free thinker pronounces hastily without cognizance of the cause, for he studies nothing of human nature, but proceeds altogether upon an abstract nature of things; a mere cant phrase, of which he has no clearer conception than the lowest vulgar have of their mysteries, and would be as much at a loss to give a steady intelligible explanation.

Then for the other part of his subject, Religion, he takes his idea of that from the nurse and the priest, whom he affects to hold in such sovereign contempt: for he apprehends it to contain nothing more than the first rudiments imbibed from them. But he might reflect that perhaps his nurse or some other old woman first taught him to read, yet he would not now take his estimation of our language from the spelling and pronunciation of the old woman: and the priest who taught him his accidence might not be the most enlightened of his order; or if he were ever so knowing, could convey no more than a child was capable of receiving. Who as soon as he began to think himself a man, which was probably before he left school, resolved to regard no more what was said to him by priests upon the subject, so could learn nothing more from them.

But it should be remembered that as in some sciences there is an exoteric and esoteric doctrine, both many times couched under the same language and the same figures, the latter not capable of being conveyed completely by all the teaching in the world without honest and careful application in the recipient to digest it well for himself: so in the science before us, we are told there is a killing letter and a quickening spirit, which may be relative; for a popular system designed for everybody's use, cannot be expected in all its parts, equally to suit everybody's digestion; so that the literal sense, which is poisonous to one man, may prove wholesome to another, and the spiritual, which is vivifying to one, may seem as dry and tasteless chaff to the other. Therefore it becomes every one who thinks himself a profound reasoner, to search fairly for what rational construction things are susceptible of, and to whose rational uses they are applicable, before he pretends to decide upon the merits of them: if anything herein before

suggested in this and the preceding Chapters shall afford hints to help forward such an inquiry, I shall esteem it the luckiest thing I could have wished.

CHAP. XXII*.

WORD, OR LOGOS.

HAVING in the last Chapter explained the Divinity of Christ, in a manner consistent, as I hope, both with reason and orthodoxy, I may now proceed with more freedom and less liableness to be suspected of evil designs, to examine some other ideas of that Divinity, particularly those concerning the Logos or Word, Creator of the World; I have already touched upon this subject in my Chapter upon the Trinity, where I have committed an oversight in saying, § 11, that I had not happened to meet with any person of repute in the Church since Beveridge, who held Christ to be the Demiourgos or Maker of the World. But I have since seen a discourse, in four parts, of a late Bishop of London's [Dr. Sherlock], whom I shall never deny to have been a person of very great repute in the Church, wherein that opinion of my lord of St. Asaph seems enforced with great strength and acuteness of argument. As I was one of his lordship's flock, attended his discourses with much pleasure, and I hope with some emolument, and had read them when first published, I had probably heard and must certainly have read, the very discourse alluded to above, yet it proved like the seed scattered by the way side, which the birds of the air came and picked up and carried away. I could easily conceal this slip of memory from the world by changing a few words in the Manuscript, which still remains locked up in my custody: but I choose to let it stand, agreeably with the character of the Searches, unsolicitous to hide their defects, but rather willing to put their readers upon the guard against admitting too hastily whatever they may advance.

For the like reason I shall take notice of another mistake, falling naturally enough to be considered in the way of my present inquiry, wherein I have been set right upon an article in Mr. Locke's Essay, by a very learned and judicious Expositor [Dr. Law, Bishop of Carlisle, in his Defence of Mr. Locke's Opinion], in answer to an Essay on Personal Identity, more intimately acquainted with that excellent author, who by telling another person, has very lately told me, that he had misapprehended him; for that Mr. Locke used Person, not as a metaphysical term, comprehending what belongs to a man in real existence, but as a forensic, denoting some such quality or modification as denominates him a moral agent, and renders him a true object of rewards and punishments. This discovery proved no mortification to me, as the reader will easily believe; for he must have perceived me always uneasy whenever fancying myself in discordance with Mr. Locke, and therefore will conclude it must give me sensible pleasure to find myself relieved from such uneasiness.

2. But as that other person, through whose correction I received mine, appears to have the prying eye and sedate industrious countenance of a Search, I am willing to acknowledge him for a relation, and beg leave to stand up for the honour of the family, by defending the commendableness of his attempt to settle what it is that distinguishes one person from another, understanding that term as relative to the real existence, which is now

proved upon us not to have been the object had in contemplation by Mr. Locke.

This is going as far as I can, for with respect to the success of his attempt, I find myself forced rather to take side with our reprover. I always look upon my consciousness as an evidence where I was, what I did or saw at any former time: but if I had a continuation of thought all last night while asleep, I am sure I know nothing of it now, therefore it can be no evidence of anything done by me, or happening to me yesterday. Consciousness, indeed, may, and sometimes does, give false evidence. I have myself been conscious, that is, firmly believed, or seemed to remember, leaving a paper in one particular place, and afterwards found it in another, under my own lock and key. I once was conscious of having read in my bible that the tower of Siloam fell upon certain Galileans, and quoted the text so in the separate edition of my Chapter on Freewill: whereas anybody that pleases to consult his own bible, will see that I never really read any such thing. Nevertheless, the distribution of reward and punishment in another life being the act of God, nobody can suspect he will suffer a fallacious consciousness to take possession of any man: therefore whatever condition we may find ourselves in, whether in the body of a bear, or a lamb, or a man, or in one of those the angels are supposed to have appeared in, or without any body at all, provided we have a consciousness of our present conduct, we may take that for a certain evidence of our being the very persons who help that conduct, whether good or bad, and become the proper objects to receive the wages respectively earned thereby, either of sin unto death, or of righteousness unto life eternal.

But our inquiry tends to discover what constitutes our identity, not what gives us our evidence of it: and I fear we shall hardly find it in a continuation of thought. For in the first place the matter of fact, that the soul does always think, seems very disputable: in the next, supposing that point demonstrated, one cannot presently tell what is to be understood by such continuation of thought, as shall constitute an identity of person. When eight bells are chimed for an hour together, there is a continuation of sound the whole time, yet this does not constitute an identity among them, nor consolidate all the eight into one and the same bell. If upon a large army marching along, the General commands Halt, the word is given successively from one corps to another until it reaches the remotest ends of the columns, I presume every man has an idea of the word as he hears and repeats it: so then there is a continuation of the same thought running throughout the whole host, yet this can never make it all to be one identical thing. No, you say, there is no occasion it should: for it is not the same kind of thought, but a continuation of thought in general, that constitutes the identity. Well, then, how shall we know which way to distinguish one continuation from another? for there are multitudes of them in the world, and there may be a continuation of thought in general imagined, where there is a change of the subject wherein the thought at different times is found.

Romantic suppositions, I find, are not to everybody's liking: but my good cousin Search, I am sure, will not be angry with me for making them, because he practises the like himself. Let him then please to suppose a new Planet or habitable Earth created with a thousand men, who should continue to think during their abode thereon: but at the end of twenty years one half of them were annihilated, and as many new men created in their room, who should begin to think the moment the former

left off. Suppose further, that after a second twenty years the remaining half of the first men were likewise annihilated, and succeeded by an equal number of fresh men, who should go on with their trains of thought for a third score of years. Here would be just a thousand uninterrupted continuations of thought, and no more, during the whole time: yet who will say the men of the last score were the same persons with those of the rst? Besides that thought in general, taken abstractedly, is one and the same thing wherever found. You say you think without ceasing, and I presume you would say the same of me: and it is our thinking that makes us persons; for the table, which never thinks, is no person. Be it so: then our thinking constitutes us persons; but what constitutes us different persons? for I am not you, nor you me. Surely not our thinking, for in that respect we are exactly the same: what else then can it be unless our substantia. or numerical diversity? We may have different heights, shapes, gaits, gestures, voices, or wear different coloured clothes, and folks may know us from one another by those marks: but these are evidences of our being different persons, not what constitutes us such. Neither in our fictitious Planet, can you ever make out a thousand continuations subsisting at one time, any otherwise than by considering them as the thoughts of so many persons, each distinguished from the rest in some other respect than that of their thinking. Thus you see the same objection actually lies against the continuation, as I had supposed lying against consciousness, in my Chapter on the Existence of Mind, Vol. I. p. 297. For the idea of person must precede that of continuation: so it is no help to tell me I may find my personality by my continuation, because I must settle my idea of personality before I can make use of the explanation.

3. We Searches, although many of us are not clever at handling the telescope, are observed to be in general very fond of the microscope. This leads us of course to pry about amongst objects difficult to be discerned: but I humbly conceive there are difficulties in the world which are not nugatory difficulties. We often find them useful to ourselves for keeping our thoughts distinct and steady: and sometimes if we can get a good pencil to delineate our microscopic observations neatly, may make them serviceable to other people, and give a little check to the fluctuation of language and ideas common among mankind. Now for the credit of my new relation, and myself, I shall endeavour to make out that this object, which we have holden under the microscope, is a matter of importance: nevertheless, as it does not suit with the honesty of a Search to extol things higher than they deserve, I shall first point out in what particular I think it of no moment.

Our inquiry does not seem to promise a result that can at all contribute towards advancing that main purpose of Religion, the keeping mankind in order by the hope of future rewards, and dread of future punishments. For our people do not build their expectations upon a nice and accurate survey of their own frame and constitution, but upon the proper foundation whereon they ought to rest them, namely, the Word of God, who has promised to recompense every man according to his deeds. Now in the word Ma they include their idea of Person, so as to believe that each and every of them in his own person shall receive the adequate recompense of his doings. And as their assurance depends solely upon the divine Promise, they may be safely left at large, to fix or fluctuate in their own ideas of person: for whatever they apprehend for the time to constitute them the same person, they know that God is able and faithful to continue or restore it to them.

If consciousness makes the person, when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, their consciousness of things they have now forgotten will return. If the thinking soul be themselves, he will preserve the soul entire after dissolution of the bodily frame, and invest it with a glorified or diabolical body, capable of receiving blissful or tormenting sensations. If their body must consist of the very same matter, he is able to call back all the dusts whereinto they shall rot, and replace them in vital union as before. If they must have the same stature, shape, complexion, features, limbs, and organs, it is no hard matter for Almighty Power to give them a second time what they see and feel he has given them once. Or even if there should be any one so idle as to think he cannot be the same person without having the same coat on, this would make no difficulty in the present point; for he would not doubt the power of God to gather together all the threads and hairs and single particles whereinto his coat may be dissipated by water, or fire, or time, and reinstate them in their present texture, fitted for his wear. Wherefore it seems prudent to forbear perplexing them with subtile questions concerning the identity of person, and if they perplex themselves, as sometimes they will, to draw them off from the subject as well as we can, and evade a direct answer, which we shall never be able to make them comprehend. For it matters not what conception they have of the thing so long as they adhere to this general truth, that their own person, whereinsoever it consists, shall be made accountable for the actions performed by it in this life.

4. But there are some other respects wherein I cannot yet persuade myself but that a right notion of person, as expressive of our real existence, is of great importance to the interests of Religion, particularly in that fundamental article, the Being of a God; in proof whereof I have already drawn arguments in the seventh, eighth, and ninth Chapters of the Treatise on Theology, from the primary properties of spiritual substances, or persons, differing from those of the material, for which no cause can be assigned among the powers of nature, therefore recourse must be had to an Author of nature. But besides this benefit, a persuasion of the unperishableness of our persons must take off all that unwillingness to acknowledge a God, which is well known most of anything to have driven men into Atheism. They look upon God as an object of affright, a controller of their actions, a restraint upon their pleasures, and therefore resist the most cogent arguments that would draw on a conclusion they dread.

Lucretius took advantage of this prejudice among mankind, and threw out a lure for proselytes by the promise of an indemnity for all the wickedness they might please to commit: well knowing that any specious sophisms would serve to prove his point, if he could once get them to wish it true. For if the soul be nothing more than a result from the disposition of certain material atoms in a very curious organization, whenever the organization is broken up, there is an end of the soul, and all possibility of punishment removed. It had been objected against him that since chance never ceases working, she might at some future time cast the same atoms together again into an arrangement precisely the same with that they stand in at present, in which case the same soul must return. He granted that the atoms, some thousands of years hence, after infinite tumblings and tossings about, would fall into their former situation, from whence a thinking, feeling soul must necessarily result: but he denied that this would be the same soul. Just as when a company of dancers assemble together and dance for six hours, the whole is one ball: but if they leave off at the end of three

hours, and a fortnight afterwards a second party is proposed, whereon they meet to dance for three hours again; this is a ball too, but another ball distinct from the former. So the soul, which is but a dance of atoms, cannot be the same ball with that performed by the same company a thousand years ago: therefore, whatever wretched fortune may befall it, we, that is, our present souls, have no concern therein.

5. This being the state of the argument, I much fear that my industrious fellow-labourer, who I am persuaded intended no harm, has unwittingly furnished arms for the enemy; who will eagerly lay hold on the continuation to enforce his own tenets. Suppose the same collection of atoms, erst called Lucretius, should return to their pristine arrangement, and converse among us here in old England under the same name. If we went to put him in mind what a wicked dog he had been in his first appearance upon earth, he would reply, Prithee, do not twit me with that: it was not I, but somebody else, that was the wicked dog you cry out upon. Mind what your namesake there says: he is an excellent master of argument, and has demonstrated beyond all controversy, that it is the continuation of thought which constitutes the person. What have I to do with that old fellow, the predecessor of Virgil? when he hung himself up like a dog, as he might be for aught I know or care, there was an end of his continuation: and if I began to think five and twenty years ago, after a discontinuance of eighteen centuries, this was the commencement of a new continuation, a new person, that has no connection in the world with the former, who strutted about the streets of Rome in my pretty shape.

And your friend in like manner has fortified me against all alarms of a future reckoning. If your God designed me an accountable creature, he has managed very ill in making me mortal, because he will thereby put it out of his own power ever to call me to an account hereafter. What if he should work a resurrection of my atoms, and set them a thinking again? this would be a new creation, another continuation of thought, another person, not me, nor anywise affecting me. Therefore I will think freely and act freely, kiss the girls and put the bottle about, as long as I can: and when I can think and act no longer, then good night to you all, I shall sleep sound enough, I warrant. Why should Lucry the Second care what becomes of Lucry the Third? let the devils pinch and scourge and burn, till they are tired, I shall feel nothing of them. But sure he can never be so unjust as to have another boy flogged for naughty tricks played by me.

I am well satisfied my honest friend had no thought of such a turn being given to his system, being persuaded that the belief of a divine Power which would preserve to us our continuation of thought after dissolution of our bodies, was so well established that nothing new can endanger the shaking it. I believe he is right so far as to our compatriots, among whom I have scarce ever heard of an Atheist upon principle, though I fear there are too many in practice. But across the Channel they seem to be not so scarce, if one may guess by the compositions of their favourite poet and romancer, besides some other squibs thrown out occasionally on the other side the water: for that volatile people are more prone than ourselves to mistake essence for existence, our evidence of things for the things themselves, take thought and a thinker for synonymous terms, and are led by notions similar to that of the continuation, to deny the immortality of the soul. Now though the politicians, whose duty it is to preserve the balance of power, must look upon the French nation as our rivals, and avoid everything that may advance their interests: yet the Searches, being citizens of

the world, will esteem a Frenchman a fellow-citizen connected in interest with themselves, and abstain carefully from venting opinions which may be employed for overturning all Religion from the very bottom among any denizens of the same city, wherever dispersed throughout this terrestrial habitation.

6. Now the doctrine of the same individual substance cannot be perverted to such mischievous purposes: for though I find no repugnance amongst my ideas against believing it possible for God to annihilate a substance, and at any distance of time create it again the same identical substance it was before, yet I see no shadow of probability that he ever does so. And the Atheist cannot admit the possibility of such annihilation, for he denies a God, and there is none other power capable of either producing a new substance into Being or thrusting out an old one. So that if the same person be the same substance, there can be no discontinuance; but though it should lie a thousand years in utter insensibility, yet, whatever good or evil shall befall it afterwards, will affect the very same person who receives either now. Let him then turn back to the two concluding sections in the Sixth Chapter on Theology, in Vol. I., where he will see what a dismal, disconsolate prospect lies before him. Let him reflect how many requisites there are for our sustentation and enjoyment; the wonderful organization of our bodies, the curious structure of plants and animals, the disposition of the earth, in hills, and soils, and waters, all needful to supply us with externals: and whenever taken from these, he will find his expectations reduced to the lottery of chance, wherein there are a million of blanks to one prize. This must make him heartily wish to find a God, and a beneficent Providence, directing all the courses of events among things as well visible as invisible: and give a willing ear to whatever solid arguments can be adduced for the reality of such a governance.

But to prevent confusion of ideas, I shall beg the favour of him, if it be not too much trouble for a fine gentleman, just to take one peep with the microscope in order to distinguish between the identity and the essence of person; only desiring him further not to forget what he sees the next instant after he lays down my glass. Consciousness may do well enough for Mr. Locke's purpose, and that most useful one of impressing the idea of an after-reckoning upon the generality: but for the Searches' purpose, that of accurately understanding our nature, I humbly conceive it necessary to place the identity of the person in that of the substance, and its essence in the faculty of perceptivity. Substances are ordinarily ranged under two classes distinguishable from each other by their primary properties of solidity and perceptivity; these then constitute their essence, make them respectively to be what they are, and denominate them, the one matter, and the other spirit.

Bodies, or compositions of mere matter, cannot apply to themselves, nor do we ever apply to them, the personal pronouns, I, Thou, He: whose grammatical meaning, I am warranted to say, generally points out the true origin of our ideas primarily annexed to them; because bodies want perceptivity or the capacity of receiving good and evil. But I apprehend those pronouns are used, not to express the essence of a person, but to distinguish some one person from all the rest: nor are they applicable to perceptivity in the abstract, but to one particular percipient; which term includes the idea of substance. Even among bodies, though we commonly distinguish them by their qualities or appearances, yet where they are exactly similar in appearance, still we can make the distinction: as between

two eggs, for we know that a right hand egg is not the left, although for anything we can tell they are essentially the same; therefore the diversity we discern between them can be none other than a numerical or substantial diversity. In like manner, as it is said there have been twins so much alike that nobody could know them apart, when in talking to one we speak of the other and employ the word You, I, He, we appropriate those terms to each, solely upon account of their being different substances.

7. Mr. Locke tells us he had a very confused idea of substance. I believe so, because he was an accurate inquirer, who loved to examine everything distinctly. And I am apt to think the idea lies more confused in the minds of the studious than of the vulgar. Though the microscope be an excellent instrument of vision for curious objects, it is hurtful upon many occasions: for if you walk in the street with a pair of microscopes tied to your eyes, you will be perpetually running against people. We plodding folks, who deal much in abstraction, want to abstract a substance from all its qualities; and in that naked state it must certainly exhibit a very confused idea, for it discovers itself solely by its qualities. What, though I know this egg is no otherwise than substantially different from that, I should know nothing of either egg if it were not for the whiteness and oval shape before me.

If we consider the matter fairly, we shall find it full as hard with the best microscope to abstract a quality from its substance and fellow-qualities, as the substance from them. But we deceive ourselves by mistaking the quality for the effect produced in ourselves: which has put some sophists upon undertaking to prove that a rose is not red. For, say they, colour is a sensation of the mind, and the rose has no sense of any colour at all. But redness, when spoken of the rose, is a power of raising a particular sensation in us. It remains in the flower after we cease to look or think of it. We can easily recall the sensation by our reflexive power at any time without thinking of any source from whence we received it, that is, we can put our minds into the same situation they had been thrown into by the rose, and this we term an abstraction: but we cannot by any effort of imagination conceive a redness really subsisting without us, and actually striking sensations, detached from all shape, size, solidity, and the rose whereto they belonged. If in common discourse we talk of a noise, a smell, or a light, without thinking from whence they proceeded, yet upon a little reflection, we know there must be some sonorous, or odorous, or luminous body occasioning them.

There are some things we can clearly conceive in conjunction with others, though we cannot apart. I seem to myself to have a very clear conception of the surface of my table being smooth, for mine eyes exhibit that appearance without taking in any of the thickness; but I cannot conceive that surface separated from the table without an underside distinguishable from the upper upon turning it round. So I seem as clearly to conceive a substance possessing certain qualities, whether of solidity or perception; yet I cannot easily conceive either substance or quality existing apart without the other. Indeed, I can frame some confused idea of the former, so far as to believe it possible though never happening in fact; but none at all of the latter. When we speak of things external we do not apprehend them groups of qualities, but bodies possessing them; when of persons, we do not express them by their faculties, whatever we may hold to constitute them persons. I may believe myself a conscient, not a consciousness; nor a continuation of thought, but a continual thinker: nor a perceptivity, but

perceptive spirit. Even God himself we do not apprehend to be a collection of attributes, but the I AM to whom they belong. In all these expressions there is an additional idea over and above the attributes or qualities; and this I call substance, which is therefore one of the most current ideas among us. If any body dislikes the name, let him term it Being, or existence, or agent, or whatever else he pleases: for non ego verba moror modo rem teneatis, amici, I matter not the words so we understand one another's meaning.

8. Then for individuality, without which we shall often mistake in the identity of things, our idea seems somewhat confused too, or rather fluctuating, and sometimes fallacious. We cannot find it in the bodies affecting our senses, which are all undoubtedly compounds: and if we recur to subtile speculations, we shall find insuperable difficulties attending both the admission and rejection of atoms. Whatever strikes in one sensation, or rises to our thought in one complex idea, or suits our convenience to consider entire, we deem an individual. Thus in the map of a county, we expect to find every individual town and village and river; we may employ an upholder to take a list of every individual piece of furniture in our houses: and speak of a general examining into the state of every individual regiment in his army. For with us an individual is not what cannot be divided, but what we cannot or do not choose to divide.

These individuals may lose their real identity while preserving their apparent, by their parts being successively exchanged for others; sometimes without our perceiving, as is probably the case of plants and animals; and sometimes with our knowledge, as in rivers and winds, whose very essence is incompatible with a real identity. For the essence of a river consists in having a stream, that is, a perpetual change of waters: stop the influx and efflux of water, and it becomes another thing, which you will call a canal. And it is the current of air from one quarter that makes an east wind: if the air be stagnant, it is no more an east than a west wind: it is no wind at all, but a calm. So that here a diversity of substance is necessary to constitute the identity of an individual. But we term these individuals, because we cannot separate any component idea without destroying the complex or turning it into some other complex: take away the waters from your river, and it is no river, but a den or dry ditch; take away the banks, and it is a pool, or lake, or flood.

The clearest idea of a true individual I apprehend may be gotten from the contemplation of ourselves; but then we must take some pains to look for it, for the current conception will not help us. We know one another by our faces and shapes, therefore conceive our bodies to be our persons or selves. If you ask any common man for a description of his person, you will find him including his whole corpooeal frame, hair, and nails, and all: which is certainly a very complicated individual containing a multitude of parts. But if you watch men in their ordinary motions, you may perceive them contracting their idea to the parts of their compound severally according to the occasion. When I look, it is I and mine eyes that see, my ears have no concern in the business: when I hear, it is I and mine ears, for mine eyes take no share in the sound: nor do I for that instant apprehend my feet as any part of the person who sees and hears. If anybody desires more upon this topic, let him talk with another nearer relation of mine, one Cuthbert Comment, to whom he may procure an introduction by Mr. Dodsley for a silver shilling.—[*A pamphlet entitled Man in Quest of Himself.*]

9. There is yet a further separation in many very familiar expressions wherein the personal pronouns have a place; and I may say again, because it has been said once by a better man, that the grammatical meaning of those words generally points out the true origin of our ideas primarily annexed to them. Now I might, with propriety of the language current among us, talk of having seen a thing with mine own eyes, heard it with mine ears, pushed with my foot, spoken with my tongue, or paid a tradesman's bill with my own hands. All which phrases imply the idea of our limbs and organs being instruments: for we apply the same preposition to things avowedly so, as I wrote with my pen, I mended it with my penknife, I have stopped the bottle with a good cork, I can draw it out again with a screw. In all those phrases of doing or perceiving with our limbs and organs, there is a selection of the person distinct from our corporeal frame and every part of it then in our thoughts.

This selected person, which perceives and acts upon all occasions, seems the thing expressed by the word I, in its grammatical sense; for it is the same I who see and hear and push and speak and pay bills, although the parts of my body respectively concerned herein are various. Neither does the term denote any of our faculties or some particular exercise of them; for the pronoun Our grammatically implies a possession distinct from the owner; and in the expression, I slept sound for six hours last night, there is no idea contained of any exercise of the faculties at all. Therefore the pronoun there must denote a Patient, or Being, or existence, not dependent upon the body as a modification, or in my language a substance. And I conceive everybody apprehends the word I to signify a true individual without parts, when he uses it in his common discourses, how little soever he may reflect upon his so doing; for if I were to say that one half me saw a thing with mine eyes while the other half did not, or that in looking at a chess-board one part of me saw the yellow king, another the black, another the queen, another the bishop, and so on of the rest, I believe I should not be understood, nor could any grammatical meaning whatever be found in my words.

10. I have been more prolix and minute upon these points of the individual and of substance, because every now and then I meet with very sensible men, who either slight them as idle curiosities or say they can form no clear conception of them. How clear I have made them by my endeavours in former parts of this work as well as here, must be left to the judgment of others upon making the experiment by perusing me carefully; for I do not pretend to stand exempt from that self-deceit which beguiles us often to think ourselves extremely clear upon matters, wherein others more sagacious see plainly that we are inconsistent or cloudy.

Yet I cannot easily allow them to be matters of trifling import, because from them may be drawn the fullest proof, discoverable by the Light of Nature, of our perpetual duration, and the strongest inducement to examine carefully what is likely to befall us in after times, and what we can do now to secure to ourselves a happy issue then. It will be urged we have a better light by which he who runs may read all the necessary truths concerning those things: but there are people who love to kick about in the sandy deserts of abstraction until they raise a dust which obnubilates that better light. And it is no contemptible service if one can draw such into a train of reasoning, suitable to their taste, which shall corroborate instead of weakening what they had been taught before.

Nor can it take us off from our dependence upon our maker, for nobody

doubts that he who created can annihilate: but when we reflect on his immutability, it must afford us no small evidence of his will that he should continue for ever, to find that he has already given us an imperishable nature. Then it is obvious to every eye that Being is nothing worth without well being, for which we depend entirely upon his goodness and mercy: nor is there even a conjecture to be formed upon our future condition unless from contemplation of the Attributes.

11. Another use springing from the right notion of an individual substance, though perhaps some may not think it a use, is, that it has been helpful to me in prosecuting the main design professedly aimed at throughout this volume, which was to strike out what might be called either a rational Christianity, or a Christian Philosophy. Now Philosophy proceeds by the study of nature, and builds its expectations in futurity upon natural causes. I do not forget it is the common doctrine, that future reward and punishment is distributed by the immediate act of God; nor do I desire to controvert it, nor to inculcate any other whenever going forth upon the thigh of flesh, because despairing to make any other method comprehensible to the vulgar. But when standing upon the golden thigh, attentive to the music of the spheres, although I still ascribe all to the act of God, yet it is not his immediate act to be performed hereafter: for he has already so established his laws of nature, as that vice shall naturally lead into misery, and virtue into happiness. Even that greatest of all interpositions, the sacrifice of Christ, operates by turning the course of nature, from a destructive into a salutary channel, as I have endeavoured to show in the last chapter. And I have observed that the idea of natural causes slips insensibly into the thoughts of the most orthodox, even in their popular discourses. You can scarce attend a preacher ten times but in some one of them you will hear him urging, amongst other arguments for a holy life, that if we could suppose God to admit a wicked man into heaven, he would be miserable, because he would find no gratification there for his corrupt appetites, but every thing abhorrent to his gross and carnal taste.

From hence we may gather the general opinion, safely to be entrusted with the vulgar, that it is of the essence of wickedness to be incapable of tasting the joys of heaven: and it is likewise a general opinion, that wickedness and righteousness may be exchanged for each other, for the wicked may repent and be saved, the saint may fall from his righteousness and be lost. Whence follows unavoidably, what I have remarked in former chapters, that in our distinction between soul and body, we do not make the separation clean, but take some part of the latter into our idea of the former. The rational soul, surviving upon dissolution of the body, and entering into a state of bliss or woe, carries with it a character of righteousness or wickedness, which had been interchangeable with each other during life: therefore, besides the perceptive spirit, must contain an ethereal body or vehicle, wherein the essence of righteousness or wickedness resides; for individuals can never change their essence.

Existence belongs solely to substances, and essence solely to qualities. Even if I were asked for the essence of a substance, I could not describe it otherwise than by the confused idea of a quality of possessing qualities, and of existing independently of them; wherein it differs from all qualities, which cannot actually subsist, though they may be thought of, without a quale to possess them. It is the essence of matter to be solid, that is, resistant and moveable: it may lie for ages without either resistance or motion for want of something to strike or shove against it, yet retains its capa-

city of both. It is the essence of spirit to be perceptive: it may remain for ages under a total insensibility for want of objects to perceive, nevertheless continues capable of perception all the while; as we believe ourselves to do during sound sleep; for how sound soever our sleep had been last night, had a pistol been let off in the chamber, we think we should have heard it. Which capacity of resistance and perception are primary properties, given to their respective substances on their creation, and inseparable from them: for neither matter nor spirit can ever lose its essence, or exchange it for the other while retaining its existence; yet are such essences distinguishable in idea from existence, though few people care to make the distinction.

But there are secondary essences, much more numerous than the primary, resulting from composition, which may be produced, destroyed, renovated, and altered; yet not otherwise than by some change in the substance of the compound. I will not presume to limit Omnipotence, but I dare pronounce that no created power, or second cause, can work a change of essence in any subject, unless by some accession of new parts, or subtraction of old ones, or change of disposition among them: all which cannot take place in individuals which have no parts, nor can admit of any. Hence it seems to follow, that all perceptive creatures are intrinsically alike, what varieties are found among us of wise and foolish, good and wicked, sedate and giddy, angels, men, and animals, coming to us respectively through the various dispensations of providence ordinary and extraordinary: which I have taken for the basis of my Chapter on Equality. At least I can find no solid evidence of an intrinsic difference, and if there be such it must have been the work of God at our creation. He must then have said, Let these spirits be more perceptive than the rest, or have another faculty superior to that of perceptivity: and it was so.

12. But the most important service to be drawn from knowing that person implies an individual substance is the keeping us orthodox upon those two sacred articles, the Trinity and the Logos. I have already shown in my Chapter upon the former, that Person, among the Romans, carried a very different signification from what it does among us; and might have made a good use of the passage in Tully's Oration for Sulla, if I had recollected it. The want of being acquainted with this change of meaning, together with the awfulness of the sacred mystery which must be believed in all its branches under pain of damnation, has made our common Christians at the same time both Tritheists and Unitarians, though they do not know of their being the former. For when charged with it they will deny the fact, and sincerely: yet if you watch their ideas in discoursing upon the subject, you may perceive them apprehending the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as much three distinct Gods, as Thomas, John, and Peter, are three distinct men. Nevertheless, they really believe the Unity of the Godhead, and so are made to swallow the camel with the bunch of round contradictions upon his back. In order to escape the mischief of an equivocal term, I crave leave, throughout the rest of this Chapter, to import the Latin word Persona to stand for the classical sense, appropriating Person to the idea conveyed in the common acceptation.

The reader will now perceive me entering upon my subject, from which it is likely he has thought me wandering all this while. I have never forgotten it, nor ceased making towards it as fast as I could; but there started up a crowd of objections and difficulties in the way, which, like so many independent freeholders, kept pushing and punching, and terrifying me about,

so that I have been forced to twist and twine over a great deal more ground than had otherwise been needful. And now I am gotten into the open road, another danger presents. For I see the mitred coach coming rolling along, with the quadripartite discourse upon Phil. ii. 6, to 11, peeping out at the window. It is drawn by six stout horses, named Divinity and Learning for the wheel pair, Acuteness and Smartness at the pole end, Oratory and Elegance for the leaders. It drives in a track so near me that I am afraid lest my little chair, lugged along by the one horse Puzzle, should hitch upon some of the wheels: which alarms me greatly, for that strong-built carriage is one of the last I would venture to hit against. I wish the same masterly hand who has helped me so well off with Mr. Locke, could find room to do me the like kind office with my late much-honoured pastor. But a remedy cannot be applied until the particulars of the complaint are known: so I shall proceed to draw out my thoughts with the sober freedom and honest persona of a Search, unconscious of any evil intention or hostile disposition, which might constitute me the true object of that species of punishment called blame or censure.

13. I shall take for my text some of the first verses in St. John's gospel, which it is but within these few weeks I have seemed to myself to understand. I had touched the clue in my chapter on the Trinity, but could never catch hold of it, so as to guide me through the labyrinth till now. By the *Word*, I do not apprehend St. John understood a distinct substance, or agent, or person, the same with Jesus Christ, but employed it as a figurative term well known among the Jews and primitive Christians. Whose manner of figuration being different from our own it seems expedient to introduce our explanation of an ancient figure by the example of a modern; and because a man is likely to talk clearest upon what he is best acquainted with, I shall take my rise from my own works.

As I am a great personifier, I have, in the prelude to my chapter on Charity, addressed that virtue as a person in the following words. Well may I style thee everlasting, for thy years are not to be counted, nor of thy being is there beginning or end. Thou wast with God before the worlds were made, coeval with the attributes: thy mild persuasions moved him to create: it was they first prompted infinite Wisdom to contrive, and employed Omnipotence to execute the glorious, universal plan.

In all these preludes I write under inspiration of the slender stripling Genius, for mine is but a slender spark: and had he happened to dictate the latter part of the passage above cited in a different turn of phrase, as thus, By thee were all things created: thou in his presence and with his approbation employedst infinite wisdom, &c., I do not imagine the old gray-beard, Judgment, whom I always desire to stand at our elbows upon these occasions, would have rebuked him: for he must have known that our countrymen would enter readily into the spirit of the figure without hazard of their taking us literally. But supposing that we lived interspersed among heathens, and that many of our Christians were converts newly brought over, used to a plurality of gods; there might then be a danger of their mistaking the goddess Charity for a distinct deity independent on the Supreme. Still he might let the passage stand, only would think proper to subjoin a note of his own hand to this effect. Now I desire it may be understood I do not mean by Charity an agent or being operating in the creation, but an attribute denoting that God created in his infinite goodness and mercy.

14. The grave gentleman might suggest, too, that the doctrine of final causes, of which goodness is the ultimate, was the only clue for leading into

a right understanding of the divine economy, the knowledge whereof would secure us peace of mind, that principal source of happiness, without which life is not life. This his pupil might express by saying Charity was the light and the life. Then he would recollect of his own accord, for the chit has a pretty good memory in things hitting his fancy, that people are sometimes called by the name of a quality they possess in an eminent degree, as that such a one is innocence itself, or patience itself, and that in some of the classic writers it is said of a fine woman, when dressed out she is beautiful, when in undress she is beauty itself. And having been taught early by his mother Mnemosyne to read the Testament, wherein is manifested the transcendent goodness of Christ, to do and to suffer so much for the sake of mankind, he might think it no improper appellation for the Saviour to style him love or charity itself. Having hit upon this thought, he might pursue it a little further by adding, that Charity clothed herself with flesh, and descended in a visible form to converse among mankind.

But as the little urchin is imitative as well as inventive, if he should attempt to copy the simplicity of gospel style, old Vigilant would certainly take him to task, telling him, Look ye, child, I cannot suffer such a playful wanton to take what liberties you please with the sacred oracles. Remember what a blunder you committed with Stahl. I will never hazard a profanation of the scriptures by mimicry: so if you will take anything from thence, you must do it in the very words recorded there. The most I can allow you is to substitute a modern figure in the room of an ancient, where you can find the same language applicable to both. Under this restriction, together with the admonitions and instructions given above, I suppose the boy might run on as follows:—

In the beginning was Charity, and Charity was before [the face of] God, and God was Charity. The same in the beginning was before God. All things were made by her, and without her was not made a single thing which was made. In her was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shone in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. That was the true light which enlighteneth every man coming into the world. She was in the world, and the world was made by her, and the world knew her not. As many as received her, to them gave she a capacity of being begotten the children of God, to such as confide in her name. And Charity was made flesh, and pitched her tent among us, full of benignity and truth. And we beheld her glory, the glory as of an only child before the Father.

Perhaps the English reader will charge my boy with taking liberties, notwithstanding the admonition given him to forbear: but I appeal to the Greek reader whether our translators have not taken greater liberties, particularly by transposing, God was the Word, into, the Word was God, which is not quite so easily susceptible of the construction put upon it above. Nor am I conscious of having altered anything in the text, other than the figure, except one little transposition in the last verse, to escape the old-fashioned style of a parenthesis; and addition of, the face of, in the first verse, which was a needful and explanatory paraphrase, to prevent before being understood of time instead of place. Therefore if there is a change, Mr. Locke must allow it was not I, but some other persona, who made it.

If anybody asks me, Do I believe that Charity was meant by the Word? he must have forgotten that I produced it as a new figure introductory to an understanding of the old one, not as directly explanatory thereof. For I do not take it to be any attribute: the nearest of them is that of Wisdom,

yet the Word seems to denote rather a particular production of Wisdom than the attribute itself. The learned, in treating upon this subject, choose to retain the original term of Logos, well knowing it is susceptible of more various significations than the English, Word, some of which will not bear translating thereinto. I am not well enough versed in ancient authors to display this variety by quotations from the old dons of Greece, and if I tried to rummage out a few by help of Scapula, it might not much edify the English reader. But it happens very fortunately that here is no occasion; for Logos makes its appearance so often among us, and finds a place in so many of our words, only transformed after the modern fashion into Logy, that I can let my countrymen into the secret without making them hurt their eyes by poring upon the nasty crooked letters.

Sometimes Logos is words, as in philology, tautology, etymology; sometimes the structure of them, as in phraseology; sometimes a particular manner of speaking, as in eulogy and elegy, which are the speaking well and speaking out or highly of a man. In apology it is throwing off or obviating a censure; in doxology a form of thanksgiving; analogy is the similitude or correspondence of particulars between things; logic is the art of reasoning, and the logical worship is rendered reasonable service in Rom. xii. 1. Astrology is the pretended knack of telling fortunes by the stars; zoology, the knowledge of animals, their species, forms, and names; meteorology and mineralogy, that of vapours and fossils: ontology, physiology, and theology, are sciences; genealogy and chronology can scarcely be called sciences, being no more than memorials or plans of lineages and alliances, or of events recorded in history in order of time as they happened. This last I take to be the sense belonging to the Logos of St. John, craving leave to give it a new name manufactured out of Grecian materials; and as genealogy is the plan of descents in a family, so I would call this Soterialogy or the Plan of Salvation.

This plan formed in the eternal counsels of God, I apprehend represented throughout the Gospel as taken by him for his guidance in the first formation and subsequent administration of the moral world. It was necessary for the execution of it that man should be made a peccable creature, for there could have been no Salvation where there was no sinfulness to be saved from; and that there should be a remedy provided for the recovery from his lapsed state by means of the seed who was to bruise the serpent's head. Christ therefore, who by another figure is called the Corner Stone of the Building, was the point whereto all the preceding lines of Soterialogy converged, and from whence they diverged again afterwards for diffusing righteousness among mankind, and as I have argued in my Chapter on Economy and in the last Chapter, will continue diverging through our next stage of Being, until the final consummation of all things, when the kingdom shall be delivered up to the father.

16. Christ, therefore, being the centre and principal object in the plan, is called the Word, by a metonymy of a part for the whole; the same figure whereby we frequently speak of so many hands on board a ship, or of a general taking a town. By this light we may see how Christ is the Wisdom of God and the Power of God, which by the Greeks was counted foolishness; and discern the full scope of St. Paul's meaning, where he determines to know nothing save Christ and him crucified, for nobody can doubt that he did desire to know and to teach the whole of the Soterialogy. His first eleven Chapters to the Romans appear to be wholly occupied in teaching this science (for though it was but a plan before God, the study of it is be

come a difficult science among men:) and to set right the Jews, who had misapprehended it as running in a multitude of forms and ceremonies with a temporal monarch for their centre. And in the rest of that Epistle he pursues some other lines in the hinder part of the same plan, drawn for spreading righteousness upon earth. Therefore when he confines himself to the knowledge of Christ, in whom all the promises of God, that is, the eternal counsels laid down in the plan, are yea and amen, he means no more than to disclaim all pretence to rhetoric and human science, or the vain babblings of Philosophy: nevertheless, if Philosophy can furnish anything in confirmation or illustration of the Soterialogy, I do not imagine he would call her a vain babbler.

Among the Jews and primitive Christians derived from them, it was customary to pursue their figures much further than would be allowable or intelligible among us. By this means we sometimes quite lose the resemblance, and understand them literally when speaking figuratively. We find Christ called the Word upon occasions where the figure does not appear: so we take them for synonymous terms, personifying the latter, and making it a distinct agent or person from God, but the same with Christ. This involves us in perpetual obscurities and contradictions, and so mangles our Religion as to disfigure it quite, laying it open to attacks, of which we may say, Pudet hœc approbria nobis, et dici potuisse et non potuisse refelli, It is shameful to find both that such reproaches can be cast upon us, and we not able to wipe them off.

Whereas we should consider that the name Christ is a complex term, comprehending the human body and soul of Jesus together with God the Son united thereto, as set forth in the last Chapter: and this third part, though a distinct Persona, is the very same individual Person with the Father who created all things visible and invisible, and with the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me, says the Catechumen, and all the elect people of God. Therefore the work of creation being, as observed in my Chapter on the Trinity, within the peculiar province of the Persona, called Father, Christ could not in any sense be the agent or operator in creating. He could at most, by help of the hard-featured metonymy above mentioned, be styled the Word by which, or according to the scheme whereof, all things were made: and by the like far-fetched metonymy of taking the whole for a part, he may be said to have come down from the Father, been made flesh, or embodied in Jesus, and pitched his tent among us.

This seems the only way for effectually taking the admonition of Athanasius against either dividing the substance or confounding the Personæ; and this, I apprehend, may help to unfold that great mystery, which St. Paul says had lain hidden for ages, proving a stumbling-block to the Jews, and counted foolishness by the Greeks, until revealed in Christ, and which contained the spirit piercing through the dead letter, whereby the disciples were enlightened to a clear comprehension of things the carnal man could never know because they are spiritually discerned. Nor can we desire a better clue than the Soterialogy for leading us safely through several dark passages in the Scriptures wherein there has been much confusion and wandering, particularly St. John's introduction to his Gospel.

He is going to give a history of Christ's ministry upon earth: this he ushers in by a brief account, in the concise apostolic simplicity of what occasioned his coming; which was, the original constitution of mankind established upon a plan or word, something similar to Pythagoras' oath

of Jove, regulating the courses of all events which were to follow. This word was before God, that is, God held it in contemplation before him, as we hold a paper of directions before us when we would proceed in exact conformity thereto.

17. Then, the Word was God, upon which such mighty stress has been laid to prove the divinity of Christ as a distinct Person from the Father, if read as in the original, God was the Word, will appear inserted purposely to prevent the notion of a distinct actor, by declaring that God himself was the Agent proceeding to creation in pursuance of his Word; and we may presume this little sentence was thrown in for the sake of the Gentile converts, who having been accustomed to the notion of twelve greater Gods, whom one may style the Senate, or supreme Legislature of Heaven, might have fancied St. John only reduced them to two, and by the Logos understood another God, like Minerva, the daughter and first begotten of Jupiter.

The three first verses are supposed by some to speak of matters passing before this visible world had a Being, as the creation of angels and hierarchies of heaven; and to prove the eternity of the Word, coeval with God. But though I have said the plan was laid in the eternal counsels of God, I gather this by the light of nature from his immutability, which will not permit me to imagine him striking out new plans on a sudden, which he had never thought of before. I cannot infer it from the expression, In the beginning was the Word, which in my apprehension contains nothing prior to this sublunary system. For St. John had nothing of the preadamite belonging to him: nor did he meddle with the babblings of philosophy running out into speculations concerning a Chaos, the grave of a former nature, and womb of the present. His business lay solely with his fellow-creatures upon earth, to transmit his master's doctrines for their benefit in the plainness of a Gospel-writer: so that he cannot with any plausibility be supposed to carry his thoughts any further back than to the formation of Man, the forbidden fruit, and the promised seed; and with him the beginning was the entering upon those first dispensations leading to that of the Christian.

18. Then for all the things which were made, I can extend them no further than to all the courses of Providence respecting the moral world, and scheme of the Redemption. If anybody insists that the courses of nature were appointed with a reference to the others, I feel no repugnance against agreeing with him: nor do I doubt the animals, and plants, and other material works were performed with a view to the uses of man. The trees of knowledge and of life, the condition of Paradise, the curse of God upon the ground, have a visible connection with the moral economy. Or if it be insisted further, that the higher orders of creatures have a concern in the events befalling Man, I can make no objection here neither, without recanting what I have endeavoured to maintain in a former volume; as believing that every line in the divine plans nearly or remotely connects with every other, and affects the interests of every creature. But this is another larger plan, which we may call the pantology, or plan of universal nature, comprehending all the works of God, visible and invisible, whereof the Soterialogy was a part. It is a very telescopic idea, tending greatly to enlarge the mind; wherefore, I am willing to entertain as much of it as I can hold in my imagination.

But St. John never troubled himself with physiology, astronomy, metaphysics, nor the laws of universal nature. He, we may presume, had determined with his brother Paul to know nothing save Christ and the Sote-

rialogy: therefore we can expect nothing from him but what relates immediately thereto. And this manifests the wisdom of choosing such simple men for Apostles of a Gospel which was to be preached to the poor. We philosophising folks cannot forbear mingling our own discoveries among the Christian verities: we may be serviceable herein to one another, but are by no means fit for preaching to the poor; nor indeed for preaching at all, unless to congregations very rarely to be met with, who have golden thighs to stand upon, and ears to hear the music of the spheres like ourselves.

I have remarked already that the Word is frequently applied as an appellative to its central point; and I may add, that it is sometimes used promiscuously in both senses of the whole and of a part, in such manner as makes it difficult to distinguish in which sense each particular expression ought to be understood. But here I apprehend the metonymy first takes place at the 8th verse. The world said to be made by him, I suppose is commonly understood in the sense it bears generally in familiar discourse, including all sublunary productions, whether rational, animal, or inanimate. But we often use it in a much more restrained sense, as when we exhort a retired person to converse a little more in the world, or talk of publishing a thing to the world, or telling it to all the world. And it appears evident that St. John took it in some such confined signification; first, because it is not true that the light did enlighten every man who came into the world in China, or Tartary, or America: in the next place, because the 11th verse seems an explanatory repetition of the 10th, received him not, certainly carries the same force with knew him not: and we may presume the world in one verse explained by His own in the other. Therefore it was the world of Jews which was made by, or through, or for sake of him; for I humbly apprehend the preposition will bear translating so; that is, the Mosaic law was given purely to introduce and prepare for the evangelical.

19. To those who received him he gave a capacity of being begotten the children of God: and in the 13th verse, they were begotten, not of bloods, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Here is a variety of begettings: the Israelites were begotten of bloods in the plural, that is, their bloody sacrifices, a metonymy for the whole ceremonial law; some of them were begotten by the rectitude of will and good principles, or expectations derived from their ancestors from whom they were descended in the flesh; others, not Israelites, were begotten by the happy disposition of mind in the man, as those antediluvians mentioned by Milton, whose religious lives titled them the sons of God, and so the sons of Belial spoken of in the Old Testament were begotten by their wicked dispositions, but the believing disciples were begotten by the special Providence of God bringing them to the knowledge of the Word, which gave them a capacity of such generation.

If you object that the negative annexed to the three first implies they were no begettings at all, for which I see no grounds, yet you cannot reject the last. So it still appears that in the Apostle's sense, God had begotten more children than one. Therefore when one is styled in verse 14 the only begotten of the Father, it must be from some peculiar manner of begetting whereof the other children did not partake. And what that was may be gathered from a word in the same sentence, which directs our eyes to behold the glory, or estimation, or consequence which none other can come up to, and wherein he was singular. Observe further, that he is styled the first begotten in several places of Scripture, which implies that others were begotten in the same manner of generation. But this I conceive relates to

the state of perfection and glory whereto Christians hope one day to be raised, when they shall become one with Christ in Personæ, though still distinct in Person: and then he will be the first begotten who was the only begotten before; as every only child becomes an eldest child, as soon as another is born of the same parents. And this is further confirmed by the text wherein he is styled the first born of every creature, where creature must not be taken in the common acceptation, including all mankind, but of the new creature by regeneration: and is sometimes rendered building or edification, to denote that state of perfection and unsinning obedience, whereto the Saints will be raised gradually in this life and the next, by building improvement upon improvement.

Should it be admitted the flesh denotes a particular lineage, as St. Paul makes it do when he distinguishes the Jews by calling them his brethren in the flesh; for the Gentiles were as much his brethren in the flesh, if that term signifies an investiture in human nature, then the expression was made flesh, and pitched his tent among us, must mean no more than was made one of the flesh of Jacob's lineage, and lived all his time in Judea.

20. One little remark I have omitted, concerning Cometh into the World, in the 9th verse: which cannot mean, Born into the World, for children who go out again in the month have no display of the light before them: therefore it must be construed, Comes to converse in the World, or to know what passes there. This the Jews would naturally understand of their own tenets, as we should do now of the Christian established among our people in general, which a man cannot come into the world but he must quickly hear what they are.

These things being premised, I shall hazard an attempt to guess how St. John would have expressed himself had he been writing now, and to Christians: adhering to the ancient simplicity as near as possible, though I cannot undertake to do it entirely without slipping in a word now and then from the modern style.

Prior to Adam was the Word: and the Word was ever before God: and it was the Word of his mouth. From the beginning God departed not at any time from the Word which he had spoken. By it were all his dispensations made: and without it was not any of them made which was made. In it was life: for the light of the mind is life unto men. And the light brake forth upon men of dark understandings, and their darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for an evidence unto them, that he might bear evidence of the light. He was not the light himself, but came to point out the object wherein the light was to be found, that they might rest their dependence thereon. This was the true light, which is displayed to every man who cometh out into the world. He was in the world, and the world was fashioned by him, as the shoemaker fashioneth a shoe by the foot; and the world knew him not. He came unto his own peculiar people, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he means of becoming the children of God by the new birth; to such as confided in his name. Their birth was not by ceremonies, nor by descent in a peculiar lineage, nor by their human powers, but by special Providence of God. And the word was made visible in one of the chosen lineage, and dwelt among them, abounding in love and truth. And such of them as had eyes beheld his glory, the glory as of an only child in the sight of the father.

21. Thus much for the Evangelist: I come now to consider the epistle to the Philippians. Archbishop Tillotson and the bishop have both given

up the vulgate translation, Thought it no robbery to be equal with God: and the latter has substituted in its room, Was not fond, or tenacious, of appearing as God. But why his lordship should afterwards change his own translation into, Did not eagerly retain his equality with God, I cannot tell. Not that I am going to deny there are evidences of such equality elsewhere in the scriptures; for I know it is the orthodox opinion that they are to be found, and it is my custom to presume everything true that was taught me, until upon mature consideration I see cogent reasons to think otherwise. I am only acknowledging my own want of discernment to find a proof in the words of the texts before us. As well as I remember, Homer applies Isotheos to people whom he did not esteem equal to the Gods: and in the parable of the woman who had seven husbands, I never heard of anybody rendering Isangeloi equal to the Angels. Therefore if Isa Theo be susceptible of both senses, Equal or Like, it must be determined to either by the context and drift of the argument.

I readily enter into the justness of his lordship's reasoning that what Christ was not tenacious of must be something he had a title to claim, and been in possession of before: and what was that but the form of God? Which we may understand by the form of a slave mentioned presently afterwards. He never was a real slave, nor reduced to a state of slavery, but submitted to be treated like one, and died the death that slaves were put to when convicted of capital crimes: therefore cannot by this be proved real God, but honoured as God.

Had his lordship adhered to his first version, the passage had run on all of a piece: for form, appearance as, likeness, and fashion, I take to be synonymous terms, introduced only to vary the phrase. If a piece of French plate be made exactly in the likeness of a silver mug, it must have the form, and fashion, and appearance of that. When God made Man in his own likeness, he did not thereby make him equal to himself; and when it was said to Moses, thou shalt be a God unto Aaron and he shall be thy prophet, he was then in the form of God, yet without participating of the divine nature.

22. The Messiah was chosen in the eternal counsels of God to be the principal object in his great plan of the Soterialogy, the restorer of mankind from the way of utter perdition to that of righteousness and eternal life. And this I apprehend alluded to in that passage, Father, glorify me with thine own self, the glory I had with thee before the foundations of the world. His name was had in high honour and reverence among men from the beginning. He was esteemed to centre in himself the three most respected characters of king, priest, and prophet, to be the redeemer of Israel, the blessing of all nations, the seed that should bruise the serpent's head, the Emmanuel, or God with us. These were high and divine honours, and to whomsoever they belonged, he might well be said to be in the form of God.

His conception was announced by an angel; his birth declared by a choir of angels; his star appeared in the East, filling the Magians there with exceeding great joy, and bringing them a long journey with precious offerings in their hands to worship him: the spirit of piety inspired Simeon upon sight of him to burst out in transport, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

In all this he appeared as God. This then was the appearance he was not tenacious of retaining, the form he emptied himself of. Which expressions exclude an equality by having the divine nature joined with the human: because this he was tenacious of retaining to the last, he never

emptied himself of. He could not do it; it would have defeated the purpose of his coming to have done it: for had he been a mere man when suffering upon the cross, we should have been never the better for him.

It is an axiom of the schools that nothing like is the same; therefore, the likeness of men cannot belong to the assumption of human nature, for that gave him the real essence of a man, made him the same thing. But I take it the likeness relates to his laying aside all dignity, and conversing among publicans and sinners like a common man. From this humble state, as the bishop observes with great advantage to St. Paul's argument, he descended another step still lower by taking upon him the form of a slave, submitting unto death, even the death of the cross: which went so much against the grain that he prayed with agonies, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, with the submissiveness of a slave he became obedient in this hard service to the Will of the Father.

23. Wherefore, as St. Paul goes on in pursuit of this topic, God hath also exalted him. I do not know whether any stress may be laid upon the preposition joined in composition with the original verb, which seems to denote an over-exalting, or raising to a higher state than he stood in before, but certainly the exaltation, to make it an encouragement to humility in the Philippians, must be a reward greater than what had been laid down. Therefore it cannot relate either to a real equality or the estimation of one; for then it must have been an exaltation to a nature greater, or esteemed greater than that of God himself.

Besides, the next verb Hath given, which might be more fully expressed by Hath gratified, implies a free donation, not a restitution of something whereto the party had a prior title; yet in this case seems to import a gratuity of the same kind, though higher in degree, with the thing departed from: therefore, it must be a dignity of name, or character of Christ or Logos, which he emptied himself of, and was not tenacious of retaining, because he was gratified with a name above all names; so that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that our Master Jesus is the Christ; for so the words might be more fairly rendered than that Jesus Christ is Lord, as any one may be satisfied by consulting Mr. Locke's notes upon the appellation, Lord. 1 Cor. viii. 5.

It is not easy to guess what was meant by things in heaven, or things under the earth. It cannot relate to the angels, for they have no knees to bow: they may put them on when sent upon errands to earth, as we do boots upon a journey, but it does not appear at all likely that they ever wear them at home. Nor were they ignorant that Jesus was Christ, even during his lowest state of humiliation.

No more can it relate to the devils: St. Paul, be sure, had no faith in Pluto and his subterraneous host, neither did he preach the modern doctrine of devils living in a burning cavern somewhere under ground. They are called in Scripture style princes of the air, and powers of the air. Nor yet do they honour the name of Jesus now more than they used to do heretofore, but dishonour him wherever they can, as much as ever, by perplexing the minds of Christians daily with absurd, enthusiastic, and unchristian fancies, and tempt them into all kinds of impurity, contention, and malice.

It seems the most probable conjecture, that bowing the knee answers to the very vulgar expression of knocking under, and imports that at the name of Jesus every other name shall stand eclipsed: whether those of the blessed Spirits currently believed among the Jews to reside in Heaven; such as Enoch, Abraham, and Elijah; or of persons illustrious for exploits not

likely to raise them to Heaven from out of their graves and sepulchres under ground, as Nebuchadonosar, Alexander, and Cæsar; or of princes and potentates, and men famous in any science, or art, or accomplishment upon earth.

This we have seen verified down to our own times, for we know how sacred the name of Jesus is holden throughout the most enlightened, though not largest, part of the globe from him called Christendom: and that more than one worthless creature has gained a dominion over nations, and kings, and emperors, merely by pretending to be his vicar.

24. It will be worth while to bestow a little thought in examining how this exaltation came to be so desirable a reward in the eyes of the meek and humble Jesus as to make him endure the cross, and despise the shame for the joy that was set before him. It has occurred to me formerly that this seemed representing him overrun with vanity and ambition, that he should be ready to do and suffer anything for sake of an unbounded popularity among men and angels, and making all the other highest dignities crouch under him. But when I reflected on the importance of his having such a name, and the principal line of his character, my scruple instantly vanished.

We have seen in the last Chapter, that the authority of his name is the channel through which the benefits of his sacrifice flow upon mankind: it is the power operating unto salvation, keeping the Church steady to his Religion, and enabling her members to attain that righteousness which is of faith therein. So that it was not the same, but the inestimable consequences of it, which exhibited the joyful prospect before him. Then upon turning our eyes to the character of our Saviour, whose ruling passion, if I may be pardoned the term, was a glowing charity towards God and towards Man, who came into the world to save sinners, to give himself a ransom for many, to whom it was meat and drink to do the Will of the Father, who sought not his own glory but the glory of him that sent him; we cannot imagine a reward more worthy of him, nor a gratuity more acceptable to such a temper.

For by the sacredness of his name he was enabled to rescue the race of men from utter perdition, and display the glory of God before all the hosts of Heaven, to whom the great pantology, or plan of universal nature laid down in the courses of events dependent upon second causes, had appeared imperfect. They saw the introduction of evil and a lapsed race of creatures was made necessary to sustain their own happiness: but how the Soterialogy was to be completed by the restoration of that race, remained a mystery, which they stooped earnestly down to look into, lying hidden in the secret counsels of God, until revealed in the humiliation and consequent exaltation of Christ.

Let us then, in gratitude to our deliverance and prudence to ourselves, labour all we can to preserve that name unsullied, and beware of an indiscreet extravagant zeal which might give occasion for the adversary to blaspheme, by saying that we rob the Father of his creation in compliment to the Son, and that we can support the honour of his name upon none other foundation than contradictions and assertions impossible to be understood. What language might be proper in former centuries, or how they might understand it, cannot easily be ascertained; but now in this age of freedom, nothing inconsistent or unintelligible can be received with honour. Wherefore it behoves us strongly to purify our system from everything carrying an appearance of that sort, which might give a handle for exceptions: and

with this spirit I have endeavoured to guide myself throughout this and the preceding Chapters.

25. There are other passages of Scripture in his Lordship's discourse, that possibly might be travelled through by the help of the same clue, which will bear twisting up with the line of reason, and both together form so strong a thread as all the strength and artifice of the free-thinker could not break asunder. But it does not fall within the compass of this Chapter to consider them: for I have no desire to measure swords with so great a champion, whom Homer would think deserving the appellation of Ισόθεος Φῶς, a godlike soul possessed of χειρας ἀάπτους, the hands whose grasp one dares not hazard, and Cicero admit to an equal share of the title he claimed to himself in confidence with Atticus of κραίπνον μηχαρα λογοίο, a powerful artificer of language. I had none other view than to corroborate my exposition of St. John by the passage in St. Paul, who seems to have proceeded upon a similar idea. And I have the happiness to agree with his lordship in this opinion, though to my mortification we have delineated the resemblance in strokes that I fear will not exactly coincide.

Now should another Edwards do me the honour to make another Mr. Locke of me by calling out, Racovian! he would give me little disturbance. Whether I am Racovian or no, I cannot tell, because not knowing what tenets passed current in Racovia; nor if I did should I reject them merely upon that account, until finding them to my own thinking unsound. If a native of that place coming here believed London bigger than Islington, I should not alter my opinion either to please Edwards or vex the stranger. When the devils declared, we know thee; thou art the Son of God: I should not be ashamed to join with the devils upon that article.

The Persona of a neutral which I have assumed in this part of the work, the better to keep up my credit with both parties and thereby bring on a reconcilement between Religion and Reason, requires me to go on calmly and carefully my own way without regard to what other people believe or disbelieve, any further than as an admonition to consider the matter more maturely. I do not set up for an advocate of the Christian doctrines determined to support them at all events; but a fair and unprejudiced inquirer into what they are. Neither do I meddle with the external evidences, for they lie in the fields of ecclesiastical history, beyond my reach: my business is only with the internal, and to lay them clearly open to inspection, rather than to enforce them. Therefore I have pursued the scheme of Reason, by the light of Nature, as far as I could in the first volume, and the early chapters of this: and in the remainder of my course am endeavouring to discover what the Gospel teaches, and with what spirit the true interpretation may be found; the better to enable my countrymen to judge for themselves of the doctrine whether it be from God.

26. In all my speculations, how much soever they may have seemed matters of curiosity, I have constantly kept an eye to use, though perhaps nothing more than an eye, without being able to lend a helping hand; and in each of them to some particular use. Even my sallies of sprightliness are not wanton gambols; they help my purpose of gaining some credit with one party. For the free-thinker lays down for a rule that every man loves a joke, who is able to make one; therefore all your serious people must be humdrum fellows, because if they had the least taste for ridicule they could not fail of seeing the absurdity of old saws esteemed sacred. And here he agrees with his furthest opposite, the enthusiast, in holding that to be a

good Christian, one must throw aside all one's understanding, and all one's humour. Now I want to show him that other folks can flourish about, and jest as well as he: that without pecking at the Bible, they can find matters to joke upon elsewhere, some times in his own sweet self: and that it is not necessary the old saws should fall into contempt with a man as soon as he ceases to be a humdrum.

In both cases, whether of close combat or light-horse skirmish, there is the appearance of some important post before me, which directs or beguiles me to push forward. This dissertation upon the Logos, upon Person and Persona, exhibits a prospect of doing two services. The one, for removing those insuperable difficulties in making a satisfactory defence against the cavils of the scoffer, arising from the doctrine, that it was the person of Christ, distinct from that of God, who was the operator in the creation. The other for preventing those enthusiastic, and I may say idolatrous, notions perpetually inculcated among the Methodists, who in the fondness of their passion for Christ, extol him above the Father, and would have us place our whole dependence upon ecstatic acts of faith in his name, to the utter contempt and neglect of that degree of righteousness, attainable by faith, which was the purpose and end of his mission.

When the doctrine of all things made by Christ is daily pressed upon the thoughts by lectures, hymns, prayers, meditations, and sweetly-written books, what kind of conceptions must it produce? You may make what nice distinctions you please between the divine and human natures in Christ, the plain Christian cannot follow them: he knows nothing of your Latin Persona, but to him the two natures will blend together in one Person, composing one individual substance: and as he takes his ideas of other people from their outward figure, so whenever he hears mention of Christ making the world, he will have the idea of a human body, with legs and arms, very improper instruments for creation, or even for making out of pre-existent materials, as being incapable of reaching to all parts of this terraqueous globe. Therefore he will fancy the figure of a man, hovering in the air with a creative power, in the abstract, going out from his fingers or mouth: which must prepare his imagination to receive all kinds of magic, and conjuration, and fairy wonders, if he should ever fall into company where they are chimed with the same vehemence and assiduity as practised by his godly teachers.

It may be sometimes expedient to connive at misapprehensions of the vulgar, for I have said upon a former occasion, that the same notion may be Religion in one man which would be superstition in another; but it must always be mischievous to cultivate and expatiate upon them. I have aimed to steer the course least productive of misconceptions: it is likely some oversights have escaped me, and certain that an addition may be made to what is here presented. The distinction between Person and Persona will not answer every purpose, this latter term still fluctuating among various senses, which therefore require a subdivision to range them under their several classes. For I presume Cicero had the same consciousness all along while under his two different Personæ of severity and mildness; and so had Jesus together with his triple Personæ of king, priest, and prophet, his form of God, likeness of man, form of a slave, and exaltation to a name above all names: neither do I imagine the Personæ of the Trinity exactly similar to any of those just now specified.

It may happen that some more skilful performer will take hints from hence to draw out a correcter and fuller explanation, which shall contain

nothing appearing either to shock Reason or wound Religion, in the most scrupulous eyes. The more the vulgar can be taken off from knotty points, so much the better: nor do I believe they ever think of them unless urged thereto by the wrongheaded or such who have none other way of making themselves popular and important. The material points to be generally inculcated seem to be the belief of the Scriptures being the Word of God, and a reliance solely upon Christ, and his religion for attaining the righteousness needful for their future interests. These points I have taken my best pains to secure in the last Chapter, and laboured to remove what might endanger the security in the present.

CHAP. XXIII.

SACRAMENTS.

THERE has lately been some difference among doctors concerning the nature and efficacy of these sacred rites, wherein I am so far from intending to take part on either side, that I have not so much as made myself well acquainted with the state of the controversy; therefore if what is here offered shall prove favourable or displeasing to the litigants, it will be purely accidental, nor will any of them have cause either to thank or be wrathful with me for intermeddling. For I shall still, as heretofore, proceed quietly my own way, without the spirit of opposition or partiality, collecting whatever occurring to my thoughts may appear pertinent to the subject upon the best exercise of my judgment. The province I have professed to undertake is that of human reason, by which must be meant my own reason: for so every man who talks of reason ought to be understood if he speaks sincerely, because he cannot have jurisdiction in any province further than the scanty limits of his own understanding.

Being apprized of this, I shall not presume to dictate, nor demonstrate, nor venture to say, which last is the modern phrase for the most confident assertion, nor even wish anybody to adopt a sentiment of mine until he finds it agreeable to his own judgment: for were the thing I suggest ever so right, yet if he does not see the justness of it with his own eyes, he will not apprehend it rightly, and it will do him no good. And if I chance to fall into mistakes introductive of mischiefs I do not foresee, for others I shall be very careful to guard against, there not wanting able champions enow to prevent their taking effect by giving warning to the unwary. But reason being my province, it is obvious I have nothing to do with the evidences proving those rites to be of divine institution, which cannot be fetched from the storehouse of human reason: therefore taking such institution for granted, I shall make it my business to consider what rational idea can be entertained of them, their design and effects, presuming that if such can be found, it is the genuine and true one.

Now in order to know how our Church expresses herself on them, we need only have recourse to the Catechism, which we have all learned, perhaps most of us forgotten again, yet we may presently borrow a book to refresh our memory: wherein we shall find a sacrament defined to be an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given to us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof. Now a sign we know is ordinarily an indication only of something happening: when the weather-glass falls, we think it

a sign it will rain; when on looking through the window, we see the women pulling their handkerchiefs over their heads, we take this for a sign that it is beginning to rain: but neither the mercury nor the handkerchiefs can have any influence upon the clouds to bring down their contents, being declarative only, not productive, of an event befallen or to befall. But there are other signs, which are not discoveries of something unknown, but admonitions of something slipt out of mind: as when you make signs with your finger to a person who through mere inconsiderateness is going to blurt out a secret he knows well enough to be one.

The sacramental signs I apprehend are of the latter sort: as signs they are not efficient causes of any external event that may concern us, and as monitory signs they are not declarations of any operation performed upon us: but being ordained by Christ himself, the sight of them solemnly administered serves naturally to impress a strong remembrance of him, and remind us of the inestimable benefits received by his procurement. Hence follows that there is nothing conjured down into the elements on consecration, nor have they any quality, power, or property different from other elements employed in common uses; and the priest, agreeable to his title of minister, acts ministerially, not authoritatively herein, declaring or expressing a former act of Christ, not performing an act of his own: neither can we expect to receive any other benefit from them, than what effect the sight and the ceremony may work upon the heart and imagination.

And the term pledge may lead us into the like train, for though we often use the word for an earnest given to bind a bargain, or a deposit left in pawn for performance of an engagement, yet it is likewise employed by persons, who, intending considerable favours to another, but being apprehensive he may doubt of their sincerity or remembrance, give him some little thing in hand as a pledge of their kindness, and to satisfy him they will keep their word: to which latter sense the expression of our Church directs us by calling it a pledge, not to secure, but to assure us thereof. In like manner, when God is said to bind himself by an Oath, it is in reality no security, for if he were disposed to break it, we could not help ourselves, as a man might who receives an earnest or deposit, but a certain assurance leaving no room for doubt.

Now, assurance is a state of the mind, which it may be cast into by sensible objects, working a lively and vigorous persuasion of what we know in our judgment well enough before, but had a very faint sense of in the imagination: therefore the Sacraments are not evidences to convince, nor conveyances to put us into possession of anything promised, but methods for turning conviction into persuasion, which in the Chapter on Faith has been shown necessary to make it a virtue. For being ordained by Christ himself, and administered according to his institution, they are visible transactions between him and us, as direct and immediate as can be since his departure from earth; therefore proper pledges of his kindness to assure us of all these inestimable benefits we hope to gather therefrom.

2. But our Catechism has the words, as a means whereby we receive the same: is not this contrary to the nature of signs as just now described? Not at all, to my thinking: nor do I apprehend that signs and means denote two distinct qualities in the Sacraments, but they become means by being signs: and this may appear when we consider what it is we receive thereby, namely, Grace. It has been shown in the Chapter upon that article, that Grace, considered as an effect, is an extraordinary disposition and vigour of mind to apprehend religious truths, which a sign and a pledge,

described as above, leave a natural efficacy to produce: and in this sense it must be understood here, being spoken of as something given to us, not as something operating upon us; for we cannot be said to possess the Holy Spirit as a gift, otherwise than figuratively by a common metonyme of the cause for the effect.

Therefore we are not to imagine a spiritual influence infused into the elements, nor accompanying the ceremony, nor the Holy Ghost more peculiarly present than at other times, unless in the manner God and Christ are said to be peculiarly present where two or three are gathered together in their name, that is, solely by the greater clearness of our optics to discern them. I cannot, consistently with the doctrines of our Church, deny that the Grace comes by the power of God co-operating in his third Persona with our endeavours in the application of the means; for since no good thing can be done without such assistance, the devout celebration of the Sacraments and Grace consequent thereupon being good things, such assistance must have been afforded. But the Sacraments I apprehend obtain the divine aid in the same manner as other means of Grace, though being the most sacred of our devotions, they do it in a larger measure, and may be said to bring down the Holy Spirit as prayer is said to bring down a supply of our wants from heaven: not that it can move God, but because it moves ourselves within the stream of his blessings, so they do not draw the heavenly power to shed his influence more copiously upon the heart, but draw the heart further into the current of his influence.

I am not so rigorous as to expect that persons of all sized apprehensions should enter clearly into these refinements: let them believe the rites to be principal means of Grace, without troubling their heads about the manner of operation: if they should happen to mingle a spice of the marvellous, because they cannot satisfy themselves any other way, there will be no great harm done: but for such as have ears to hear the voice of sober reason, or eyes to discern the distinction, it seems very material they should observe it. For when once a man begins to persuade himself that he feels the very finger of God, or hears his whisper, because he feels a sensible impression upon his mind, and unusual vigour in his powers of action, he is in imminent danger of sliding insensibly into the wilds of superstition and enthusiasm.

But though whenever we find a favourable alteration within us we must ascribe it to divine assistanee, upon the authority of Scripture interpreted by our doctors; yet as argued in the Chapter last cited, the touch occasioning such change may have been given hours, or days, or months before, at a time when we could not perceive it. For we are warranted upon the same authority to compare the divine effusion to the wind, which bloweth where it listeth; thou hearest the sound thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: we feel and hear the draught of air, and see the commotions it raises among the trees, but know nothing of the powers setting it in motion, where or how far off they lie, nor the time when they gave their impulse.

3. To the question, How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church, we are taught to answer, Two only as generally necessary to salvation. One cannot presently discern the force of the adverb Generally. It seems at first to imply, that there are other Sacraments necessary for particular persons, though these alone be generally so; but this we know our Church disavows. Perhaps if necessary had been used alone, the world might have joined with it in their thoughts the adverb universally or absolutely; which

might have given them the idea of an efficient virtue in the rites, putting us in possession of certain privileges without which no man can be saved, as no man can live without eating, nor purchase lands in a foreign country without being naturalized there: but whatever may be thought of Baptism, I hope it will be allowed that a child dying under seven years old may be saved without ever having communicated of the Lord's Supper. Therefore by Generally I apprehend we are to understand no more than necessary for all ranks and conditions of people, laics as well as clergy, the poor, the low, and the ignorant, as well as the rich, the noble, and the enlightened.

Let us next proceed to consider in what sense they are necessary, and I conceive them not directly but remotely so, that is not immediately productive of salvation in themselves, but necessary preliminaries conducting to something else whereby we may attain it. Were future happiness a gift conferred by an immediate act of God, as vulgarly conceived, there would need no preparatives to fit us for the reception: for he who was able to raise up Children to Abraham of the veriest stones, is likewise able to invest any creature, however qualified in any state or condition of Being whatever, to make a Saint of a damned Soul, an Angel of a Devil, by an exertion of his Omnipotence. But Religion and Philosophy unanimously agree, that we are placed here in a state of probation, this life being preparatory to the next: which it could not be, at least to our comprehension, unless there were certain stated laws of universal Nature, rendering every man's condition hereafter dependent upon that wherein he quitted this earthly stage.

From whence, together with what has been argued in former places, it appears, that the nearest approach to perfection of the spiritual body wherein we are to rise again, which any man is capable of making in his present situation, is the thing directly productive of salvation. Which state the spiritual body is cast into by habitual just sentiments of God, and a tenor of conduct conformable thereto, called in Scriptual language coming to the Father, strengthened and evidenced by the practice of right actions, styled in the same language doing the Will of the Father. And that this coming to the Father is the sole thing necessary, may be gathered from the words of Christ himself: who has declared that all the saying Lord, Lord, prophesying, casting out Devils, doing many wonderful works in his name, will avail nothing without it: nor can it well be doubted that if Adam had continued steadfast in innocence, he might have been saved without knowledge of Christ, or application to the Sacraments.

But the Gospel has declared that no man can come to the Father unless through the Son: we are so debilitated by the original sin or sinfulness and imbecility of our Nature evidenced by the experiment made upon Adam, that we cannot possibly attain that health of the spiritual body wherein salvation consists, by our own strength and sagacity, without aid of the precepts, the institutions, and examples of Christ, which therefore are the sole and necessary passage conducting to the Father. What other passages may lie open to other persons, or whether the same degree of preparation in this life be requisite for everybody, I have already considered in former places, particularly that relating to the doctrine of the strait gate, in the Chapter on Redemption: but to us to whom the Gospel has been propounded in a manner convincing to our understanding, and to such only it must be supposed to speak, because such only will hear it, there is none other passage by which we can have any chance of arriving at our desired haven.

But since we cannot always see the expedience of his rules, nor discern

the good of that endurance and forbearance whereof he has set us a pattern; our attachment to them will die away by degrees without an habitual reverence and trust in his name continually stimulating us thereto: for it is well known in common life, how much a name avails to bind things together in the remembrance which otherwise might dissipate, and the regard to a particular person fixes a proportionable regard upon everything relative to him. Now those sacred rites ordained by Christ himself, actually delivered by him to our own persons, so far as can be done by representation, as signs, pledges, or tokens of his love to us, will have a natural tendency, if taken and received in that idea, to strengthen our trust in his name, and our reverence of his authority.

Thus the Sacraments are rather Christian than divine services, efficacious to invigorate our Faith in Christ, which is called the saving Faith, because introductive of that which is directly and immediately so. Therefore we may presume the Church pronounces them necessary, as being necessary equipments for our journey, rather than an actual progress in it: and upon having received them devoutly, we are not to look upon ourselves as a whit more in possession of salvation, but better provided with the means of attaining it. For the benefit, if any, must appear in the improvement of our sentiments and conduct afterwards: or, to use the Stoical allegory, we are still as much in a state of drowning as before; but have laid hold on the cords, by which with hearty lifts we may raise ourselves into the pure air of rectitude and holiness.

If there be any who conceit they do as well without them, or have found no improvement of their piety from them upon trial, it does not become us to judge of another, we must leave every man to his own conscience, and his own experience upon that article: yet even admitting him right, still they may be generally though not universally necessary. I cannot indeed suppose the compilers of our Catechism had any such construction in their thoughts, but the words may be true in that construction; for the practice of them may be necessary in general to keep up a spirit of Christianity among us, which spirit will diffuse us imperceptibly by sympathy among particulars not using the means appointed. Whereto must be owing that our modern Philosophy has a greater mixture of Christianity among it than the ancient: and I have met with profound reasoners, seeming to retain very little respect for the name of Christ, who have yet more of the Christian in their character than they know of, so have actually received a remote benefit from the Sacraments, though they will not acknowledge it.

4. Perhaps it may be alleged, that if Sacraments operate none otherwise than upon the mind and imagination, then Baptism is a mere empty form, being administered to infants, who can have no imagination of what is doing to them. But if they have not then, they will when grown up, and come to reflect on the solemnity wherewith they have been admitted to a participation of the benefits procured to mankind by Christ, and in their own persons receive the sign and pledge of his love ordained by himself. It would likewise operate upon the by-standers as a means of grace, were they careful to assist at it with a little more seriousness, and not as a mere customary form: for it would remind them of their own admission by the like ceremony, and engage their charity to a new fellow-traveller to whom an entrance has just been opened into the same road of salvation with themselves.

Therefore it was a very wise provision of our Church, that all Baptisms shall be celebrated publicly, except upon extraordinary occasions; and it is no less prudent in our present clergy to administer privately without asking

for your extraordinary occasion: because else, as the world goes, there would be no baptising at all, and I have said more than once before, that a wise man will do as he can, when he cannot do as he would. Indeed, as our places of worship in this humid climate are stone vaults, many times half under ground, and our children born with more delicate constitutions than those of our forefathers, who were a nation of soldiers and huntsmen, there may be a good reason against exposing them to the damps of a quarry in winter season: but since the rubric has not limited the time, why might not the ceremony be deferred till vernal suns have exhaled the dangerous vapours and blunted the cutting edge of Eurus?

There is one obstacle against this method, that the nurses would lose their fees, and it is well known the laws of fashion are holden more indispensable among us, than those of the Church: but this might be removed by the sponsors coming early to make their offerings to the air-born Goddess, and at the same time appointing their substitutes to attend for them at the sacred font, in case themselves should be engaged in the more important transactions of Tunbridge, or Newmarket: whereby both our credit and our consciences might be saved harmless at once. But though the clergy must do as they can with the laity, one should think they might do as they would with their own body, and prevail on them to certify all private Baptisms as the rubric directs, for which it might not be amiss if a short prayer were framed suitable thereto. From what has been said it appears matter of consequence to a grown person, but not to a child dying young, whether it has ever been christened or no: nevertheless, I am for a speedy administration in cases where life is in danger, were it for none other reason than a little to open the narrow minds of the vulgar, by advancing one step towards the idea of a general interest, and making it received as a popular doctrine, that a soul may be saved without actual faith in Christ, or knowledge of him during his abode in this earthly tabernacle.

5. There are folks who pretend to be mightily shocked at the absurdity of a child promising by proxies not appointed by himself, which promise, says our Church, when come to years of discretion, himself is bound to perform: but I hope none are stricken with this shock who hold the Revolution principles, and ground the liberties of this nation upon an original contract made between the kings and people of our Saxon ancestors; nor any of the French writers, who lay down that if the reigning family should ever happen to be extinct, the Estates would have a right to choose whomsoever they pleased, but are bound by the present family by the choice made by their ancestors of Hugh Capet.

In these cases there is an obligation, not otherwise binding, laid upon children born or to be born throughout all succeeding generations, which there is not in the principal case, where the child enters into no new engagement, nor gives up any natural right belonging to him: for let us consider what it is he promises, To renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, which, translated into philosophic language, is vanity, indulgence, and malice; to believe the Articles of the Christian Faith: and to keep God's holy will and commandments. The first and last of these three branches the child is already bound to by the condition of that nature whereinto he is born, under a peril of forfeiting all his hopes in futurity: and it being the doctrine of our Church, that in this lapsed state none can sufficiently fulfil those obligations without aid of the Christian doctrines and institutions, he is by the same condition of his nature likewise bound to the second

branch, as a necessary passage introductive into the other two. So here is no engagement made for the child by his Godfathers, nor promise of any thing he would not, when come to age, himself have been bound to perform, though they had undertaken nothing for him: and their part in the ceremony amounts to no more, than a declaration made with a solemnity proper to strike a strong sense upon the mind of an obligation lying upon the child, and upon us all, by the provisions of God and nature, upon our being formed human creatures.

If it might be permitted to offer one little alteration, I would propose that the word Dost, in the second interrogatory, might be changed into Wilt: for there does seem to be some handle for scoffers to be arch upon making a new-born babe actually believe a set of articles, when he can have no idea of a single term among all those wherein they are couched. I presume it was this mistake of looking upon Baptism as the actual agreement to a contract not subsisting before, rather than the declaration of one whereto we are obligated at our birth by the necessity of our nature, that made the Anabaptists scrupulous of administering it, unless to adults: for taking it in that light there seems to be a foundation for their scruples. However, if any body thinks himself not sufficiently obligated, nor consequently entitled to the privileges of a contracting party, without an act of his own, the Church has provided the ceremony of confirmation, by which he may take upon himself all that his sponsors undertook in his name, and then he may be satisfied upon the maxims whereby we govern ourselves in our temporal concerns: for I think it is a rule of law, that if an infant, after he comes of age, assents to a deed executed by him in his minority, it becomes as good and valid as if he had been forty years old at the original time of sealing.

But there might be many inconveniences in delaying the celebration until children were grown up: I have observed before, that it is notorious how apt people are to put off a thing for which there is not a fixed time wherein it must be done. Some would never think themselves sufficiently instructed to qualify them for the undertaking. Some would delay it on purpose that they might not double the guilt of complying with the world, the flesh, and the devil, by a solemn renunciation. Some would be cruelly tortured by the dilemma of precipitating the sacred rite before they were well prepared, or else running the hazard of being cut off by a sudden death while delaying longer than they ought. Multitudes would omit it through carelessness, so that we should never know who were even nominal Christians among us, and who are not. Besides, as a great deal of wickedness may be committed before seventeen, which I think is reckoned the adult age, many sprightly young people would imagine they had a license to do as they pleased, presuming upon the laver of regeneration for washing away all former scores.

For this notion is apt to arise from the rite employed, water being serviceable to wash away foulnesses remaining from prior defilements: but there is no more fruitful source of errors in Religion, than the too rigorous interpretation of figures, by applying all the properties and operations of the image to the thing signified thereby. But I apprehend the effects of Baptism, though similar, are not the same with those of water, having respect to the future rather than the past, working a deliverance from condemnation none otherwise than by the prevention of sin: the original, or other sin washed away thereby, being not an actual guilt, but a sinfulness or depravity of nature, which the inward and spiritual grace, given to us by

means of this outward sign, removes by helping to produce a thorough repentance or Metanoia; that is, a change of mind from a carnal or sensual habit to a spiritual or rational.

6. The like application of the properties in the sign to the thing signified, together with a fondness for the marvellous, has proved the source of many dangerous errors, and fatal dissensions concerning the Eucharist: by which thousands have been vexed, ruined, persecuted, tortured, and murdered, and the prince of peace made the authoriser of havoc, desolation, and carnage. For the reception of this Sacrament being termed eating the flesh of Christ, the properties of flesh must needs be annexed to the bread: and because this flesh is supposed to contain peculiar qualities not belonging to other flesh, it is necessary the priest should call down his very body crucified upon the cross into the bread; which must be transubstantiated thereinto, or consubstantiated therewith, so that Christ himself may be really and corporally present in the elements. It would become those who pretend to stickle so strenuously for the letter, to recollect that text which teaches, that the letter killeth, but the spirit maketh alive; and, indeed, this letter has killed its thousands.

But let us observe how well they do adhere to the letter in the form of the institution, comparing the Evangelists with Saint Paul's account of it to the Corinthians: Christ says, This is my body which is broken, This is my blood which is shed; the priest says, This is his body which is whole, entire, and unbroken, containing the mass of blood unshed within it. Christ says, Drink ye all of this: the priest says, I will drink this myself; so there is none to be had for the communicant. Oh! but, all things are possible with God; he who could make the same body exist in a thousand places at once, can make the same mass of blood exist at once unshed in the wafer, and shed in the cup; so that the lay communicant has already had the blood together with the body. Very well; but then he has eaten, not drank it: neither, since here are two same bloods, has he had that which was shed; both which particulars were ordained in the letter of the institution.

But these absurdities are now pretty well gotten rid of, I believe, among the thoughtful in all countries, but certainly among the generality in our own: yet I am afraid the expressions employed in the Catechism leave a notion in some people of something divine infused into the elements, from thence entering into the substance of the Soul, which is nourished thereby, as our bodies are by the bread and wine. But they may please to remember, the Church declares them an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. But the reception of grace is not an accession or alteration of substance, no more than the acquisition of a new virtue, a language, a science, or accomplishment, which are only habits of the mind: and a sign is the same to the senses, as a figure to the understanding.

The Scripture abounds in figures, oftentimes of that kind called by the writers on rhetoric, enigmas or riddles, on purpose to set us upon a diligent exercise of our judgment, without which hearing we shall hear and not understand, and seeing we shall see but not perceive. The Jews had many far-fetched figures current among them, which seem uncouth and mysterious to us: but this was too dark even for them, for they boggled at it, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Yet it is not more harsh than that used with the Samaritan woman, to whom Jesus declared that the drink he should give would prove a fountain of living waters in the belly: but it would sound very strange in our ears to talk of a man's carrying a

fountain about with him in his belly. Therefore, in the interpretation of figures, how remote soever the allusion lies, we must pursue it on till we find it terminate in something consistent with common sense, reason, and human nature.

Nor need we want a clue to lead us among the allusions frequently drawn from eating, and things relative thereto, as well in our familiar as serious discourses: mothers say they love their children so well they could eat them; mischief is said to be nuts to some folks; we talk of a thirst of knowledge, a glutton of books, cramming down divinity, of digesting what we read, of a meagre and starveling style, of crudities in expressions; of the marrow, nerves, and sinews, to which Tully adds, the blood and complexion of a discourse, of feeding the thoughts on a subject, feasting them on a pleasurable reflection, receiving the cordial of comfort, imbibing opinions, swallowing the tenets of a party or particular person; and many more figures of the like sort, taken from the same fund. Now it is not unlikely, the Jews might carry their allusion a little further remote, and where we should express ourselves by swallowing the doctrines, they might talk of eating the man himself.

And that the deglutition was of this sort appears manifest, because our church, and I believe all churches, hold that Christ is eaten effectually, so as to prove nourishment, by none but the faithful; but the faith here spoken of, operates only during the celebration, therefore the nourishment we receive is taken in then, not after the elements are down in our stomachs. Yet our Church, although disavowing the corporal, maintains the real presence of the body and blood of Christ; which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. Which restriction to the faithful shows what kind of body is really present; namely, that which is discernible only by the eye of faith, not by any of the bodily senses: for whatever body and blood, and whatever supernatural virtue or nutritive faculty, the priest has infused into the bread, are verily and indeed taken and received by the unfaithful. So that the real presence here is the same with that of God in places where two or three are gathered together in his name: if there be a man among them who did not gather in his name, who looks upon the Church services as an idle, insignificant parade, but must come to qualify himself for a place upon the test act; to him God is no more present at the communion-table, than the gaming-table, notwithstanding that he remarks, and will in proper time remember, his behaviour at both places.

It was necessary to be express concerning the real presence, because else a handle might have been taken for apprehending the ceremony a mere form, which might be complied with or let alone, an imaginary transaction without any real effect. And the verily and indeed taking of what before was called an inward and spiritual grace, must denote that the devout communicant does actually receive the benefits understood in the Gospel by the figure of eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of Christ; that is, the confirming our trust and faith in his name, the quickening our remembrance of all he has done and suffered for us: which will naturally help to strengthen our disposition to virtuous and good actions, refresh our languid hopes in the administration of Providence, and rekindle our cooling Charity towards our fellow-creatures.

7. If we consider what it is the Church requires of them who come to the Lord's Supper, we shall find it to be nothing more than to examine themselves, whether they already possess in some measure the very things

they expect to receive more completely by coming thither: so that the sacred rite infuses no new grace or virtue into us, but gives us a powerful lift in the progress we had begun before. Therefore the right preparation for this Sacrament is made by calling over in our serious thoughts whatever dispositions of mind, and courses of practice, may prove most beneficial to our spiritual interest, and summoning up a hearty resolution to pursue them: we shall be able to do this very imperfectly, but if we exert our endeavours, not in a fright and a flurry, but with a calm, steady determination, we shall find ourselves strongly assisted therein by the visible signs and pledges ordained by Christ himself, and so far as representation can go, delivered by Christ himself to us in our persons.

One of the requisites mentioned being repentance of former sins, some good women hold it necessary to afflict and humble themselves for a week beforehand by way of preparation: I have shown in the last Chapter, that humiliation and a thorough scrutiny into our failings may be performed without making it a melancholy task. It is like the work of a country, upon whom some calamity has befallen, preparing a list of their distresses to lay before the prince for relief; which I suppose they would go about with alacrity, and yet with exactness. However, if any have such a constitution of mind, as that they cannot bring themselves to hearty repentance without a great deal of sighing and groaning, I have nothing to say against it: only let them throw aside their sorrows when they approach the sacred table, for they are to bring thither a lively sense of God's mercies, with a thankful remembrance of their Redemption; but the voice of thanksgiving is the voice of joy, and melancholy is utterly incompatible with liveliness. We are told, indeed, that upon some occasions the most acceptable prayer is, God be merciful to me a sinner, which carries an air of dejection and distress; but for a Eucharist, which by the very name requires a cheerful and hopeful spirit, it will be a more suitable ejaculation to say, Assuredly, O God, thou wilt be merciful to me a sinner.

There are those of scrupulous consciences, who terrify themselves strangely at the danger of receiving unworthily, warned against in the eleventh of the first Epistle to the Corinthians. I would recommend to such, to read over Mr. Locke's paraphrase and notes upon that passage; where they will find it relates wholly to a perverse custom, crept in amongst the Corinthians, of each man bringing his own dinner with him to Church: the rich gormandized upon their dainties without suffering the poor toads, who had nothing to bring but a few crumbs of bread and cheese, to partake with them. But there being no such custom thought of now, we cannot run a hazard of the judgments there denounced by St. Paul.

And the manner wherein he directed, and this sacrament is constantly administered among us, may convince us of the intrinsic equality among mankind: for bread from the same loaf and wine from the same cup are distributed, the same spiritual nourishment afforded, the same signs and pledges of love delivered in representation by Christ himself, to all, without distinction of noble and honourable, rich and mighty, learned and sagacious, reverend and secular; but the poor, the simple, and the ignorant, are admitted to the same mess at the Lord's table, the same hopes and the same promises: so that though our conditions in this life are very various in all respects, yet the spirits of men are by nature homogeneous and similar, without other difference than what they make themselves by their respective manner of conduct.

But the expression which gives the greatest disturbance is that of not

discerning the Lord's body, which though Mr. Locke has shown ought to have been translated in another manner, and so this text has no relation to the matter causing this disturbance, yet it is apparent from the nature of the thing, as explained above, that such discernment is the act whereby the body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received: therefore more or less spiritual nourishment is taken in, and the Sacrament more or less worthily received, in proportion to the strength or faintness of the discernment.

Yet the damage is barely negative, the non-discernment, if owing to inability, being not a wickedness committed, but only a loss of advantage that might have accrued: so that if any with all their efforts cannot raise so full a discernment as they wish, or as others do, or as they have done themselves at other times, they need not affright themselves upon that account; for should they not discern at all, they would not be the worse, but only never the better than if they had forborne to communicate. Nevertheless, it is dangerous thus to receive unworthily, or approach when under an utter indisposition of mind to discern the Lord's body; lest it should grow into a habit, whereby they will be utterly debarred the benefits intended to be conveyed by this sacred rite.

CHAP. XXIV.

DISCIPLINE.

Matters of Discipline belong to Ecclesiastical polity, a different science from those of Religion or Philosophy, as respecting rather the outward forms and rules of behaviour in society, than the inward sentiments or manners: it takes in the consideration of what is practicable and suitable together with what is right in theory, and builds as much upon knowledge of the world, as upon that nature of things which is the object of contemplation in the elect. Yet reason upon observation of that nature of things may discern, that some rule and discipline in religious matters is necessary for order and convenience sake; for a certain portion of our time having been appointed to be kept holy by divine command, sacred rites having been ordained by Christ himself, public assemblies, places of worship, provisions to be made therein, persons to officiate thereat, having in the foregoing Chapters been shown instrumental to the substantials of Religion; all these things could not be commodiously supplied without established regulations prevailing among a religious community.

It may be fancied, the people might fall into such regulations of themselves upon view of their expedience, without aid of authority to interfere: which in this case being human authority, will always be liable to error, and in fact has proved more mischievous than serviceable to Religion in former times. I shall not deny that grievous and crying abuses have been committed, and so there have in secular government under all its forms, whether democratical, oligarchic, or monarchical; but will any man therefore wish to live in anarchy, among a people who had none other guide than their own discernment of what measures were requisite for their general security and well-being?

A few friends of reasonable tempers and similar characters might live together well enough, without other law than their own discretion: for they would agree in the same judgment upon most occasions, and where

they did not, would quickly be brought over into one another's sentiments. So a young sect in its beginning may subsist and grow, without aid of authority: for being few in number, they will be friends to one another, will all have the same scheme at heart, which consists of two or three particulars whereon they perpetually confer, with a real desire of mutual agreement in their common support. And yet, though I have admitted this possible in theory, I should be puzzled to produce an instance of it in fact: for there has always been some particular person of high repute among his brethren for extraordinary sanctity and knowledge in spiritual matters, whose decision is sacred, and whose word is a law to all the rest. Our modern innovators exhibit strong specimens of the force of such a prepossession, upon which they wholly depend for cementing their flock together: for they pronounce upon everything with the peremptoriness of an absolute monarch; and I have been informed that one of them in particular, if anybody scruples doing as he bids, never stands to reason the case, but tells him with a confident air, You will be damned if you do not. This was all the Pope ever had to say: yet we know too well what a mighty influence this little terrifying word gave him over kings, and states, and all temporal affairs.

But whatever may be done among a society of friends or in the infancy of a system, when it once is spread among multitudes, or become national, there must be some public regulations for keeping things from running into disorder: for the members being numerous, strangers to one another, dispersed in different places, of different humours and turns of thought, there would be a thousand various modes of discipline among them: which being seldom distinguishable from essentials by the generality, they would become a disjointed body, perpetually at variance, or at least incapable of that benefit they might receive from their mutual intercourse. Besides that provision is to be made not only for convenience of such as are well disposed, but likewise for instructing the ignorant, for engaging the thoughtless, for preventing those who will do no good from doing hurt, and restraining the licentious within some bounds of decency.

For when we reflect on the force of appearance and sympathy, we must acknowledge that every man's outward behaviour may be of consequence to others, where it is of none to himself: and though hypocrisy may prove as pernicious to the owner as blasphemy, yet it is much more innocent to the public. Therefore we see that in all countries upon earth that have any Religion among them, there is some established discipline; and though the wisest and most rationally religious of them tolerate other forms than their own, they have their institutions and usages for the generality, and for such as have none but opinions and but little thought of their own. And even the tolerated systems of any considerable currency, though not supported by law, have their forms, their customs, and their discipline enforced by the authority of some kind of consistories among them.

In making provision for the purposes above mentioned, regard must be had to the temper and character of the people, to their former persuasions and customs, to the civil constitutions of the nation, and to the sentiments of neighbouring nations, that as little peculiarity and opposition may appear, as possible. All which being out of my sphere, it would not become me to pronounce upon the perfection of any ritual: therefore shall presume of our ecclesiastical polity, as ought to be presumed of our civil, and indeed of every private man's behaviour, that it is right until apparent reasons occur to the contrary, and until standing in a situation to have full cognizance of the cause with all its circumstances and dependences. Therefore

I shall only make observation upon one or two particulars, in hopes to explain their use and tendency to such as may have misapprehended them.

2. When I was at the University I remember to have heard the young fellows, intending for holy orders, descant upon the call they must profess themselves to have, before they could obtain ordination. They seemed in general to look upon it as a remnant of the Romish superstition, and that our first Reformers understood by it a secret intimation or impulse of the Holy Spirit, urging them to the sacred function. Those of a more serious turn, yet too rational to pretend to methodistical experiences, wished they could be excused the question, as knowing of no such impulse they ever had, which might entitle them to answer in the affirmative. Others regarding it as an antiquated form, which had no real meaning, but to which for decency's sake they must give some meaning, thought a nominal appointment to some paltry curacy or chaplainship a sufficient call within the words of the institution. And thus it ever happens, that when things are not presently comprehended, there arises an idea of something supernatural: but there are so many unaccountable things in the operations of Nature, in the workings of chance, so many mysteries in all arts and sciences, as one would think might cure us of the humour of making Mysterious a synonymous term with Miraculous.

I have laid down in the first section of the Chapter on the Trinity, though without any thought of having a use for the observation here, that the delivery of the talent is the proper call to whatever work may be completed thereby: for God calls us by the voice of nature, by the situation and circumstances wherein his Providence has placed us. He has made us sociable creatures, capable of giving help, or doing damage to one another: by this he calls upon us to contribute our part towards every general interest wherein we can be serviceable. He has likewise distributed to us various talents, temperaments, externals, and opportunities: by which he calls to that particular scheme of life for which they are the most suitable, and which will be most beneficial to ourselves, and others with whom we have connection. And that I am not singular in this construction, appears from the appellation given to all common trades and professions, which are termed lawful callings, that is, employments whereto each particular man is called by the courses of nature and fortune, those two ministers of Providence for making his own life easy, and supplying conveniences for the public.

This last effect is not had in contemplation by persons entering into common occupations; the shoe-maker follows his calling to get a livelihood thereby, and has no further thought of obliging his customers than that it may bring them to his shop again; so the benefit accruing to the public from his labours is purely accidental with respect to him. But the Church, I presume, judged it requisite, that those who undertake the profession of instructing others in the relation they stand in to their Maker, and their obligation to pursue a general interest, should first be sensible of the like themselves: and should look upon their profession, not solely as a livelihood or temporal advancement, but likewise in the light of a calling, as the course of life wherein they can most effectually perform the Will of God by being most serviceable to their fellow-creatures, and best contributing their part towards the general interest.

Therefore I cannot think this demand of a call an insignificant or useless ceremony, as it would be to a shoe-maker before he were permitted to set up his trade. For the shoe-maker, if he have a due regard to his private interest, will upon that motive make the strongest and neatest shoes in his

skill and power; nor could he do better if he had the public accommodation ever so strongly at heart. But the office of a clergyman may be performed in very different manners; either perfunctorily, as a task necessary for entitling him to receive his tithes or his stipend, and to escape the censure of the world, or carefully and conscientiously, as a trust reposed in him by God, for the maintenance of Religion and benefit of the flock committed to his care: which last manner he will not be likely to pursue, without a full sense of its being a calling in the construction offered above.

Upon this view of the matter I may be allowed to suppose the Church expects that a young man, before he determines upon the ministry, should make a serious and thorough examination of his talents, his education, his taste and disposition of mind, and his situation in life: and thereupon should stand persuaded, that he is called to this function by God, not in his third Person of Dispenser of Grace and Giver of supernatural assistance, but in his Person of Father, the Author of Nature, Ordainer of Providence and Disposer of all events; as being the way wherein he is likely to serve God and mankind to best purpose. I should imagine any man might go through this scrutiny, so as to satisfy himself whether he has such call, or no; and if upon the result he sincerely thinks he has, may rationally and honestly answer to the question proposed.

As for the appointment of some certain duty, there may be other good reasons for requiring it, but I apprehend it not at all necessary to warrant his profession of having a call. For as the shoe-maker, when out of his apprenticeship, and expert in the trade, may set up his lawful calling though he has not a single pair of shoes bespoken of him; because he may provide all his implements and materials to supply any who shall be willing to set him at work, and may prepare shoes to lie ready made for such customers as are nice in their measure: so I apprehend the young divine may be said in part to answer his call, by putting himself in a readiness to enter directly upon any work that may offer; and as expertness comes by practice, he may better qualify himself to act as a master, by doing journey-work in the interim.

But there is a scruple apt to start up in some serious minds from a secret vanity, which will insinuate itself into every man, in some shape or other, in spite of his utmost endeavours to keep it out. We all fancy ourselves of prodigious importance; if we have a notion of doing service to the public, it must needs be of great service or it is nothing; hence some well-disposed persons being conscious they are not qualified to convert infidels, to silence gainsayers, to enlighten the ignorant, to soften the reprobate, are doubtful whether they have a call. But all are not to be Apostles, nor Tillotsons, nor Barrows. The Church militant, as well as the army, requires officers of all ranks; without subalterns more numerous than the field officers, neither can be complete: and in this, as in all other professions, every man does well, who does his best, be it ever so little. Without this consideration I could have no encouragement to go on with my Chapters, as expecting no mighty matters from them: but if I, circumstanced in all respects as I am, could not have employed my time better any other way, I am justified; and so is every man who bestows his pains in any work upon a considerate opinion, that he could not have bestowed them to a greater advantage elsewhere.

Therefore I conceive the call is not to be looked for in the absolute quantity of good to be done by a particular person in the ministry, but in the greater comparative good he may hope to do, all circumstances considered,

in that profession, than any he could turn himself to beside: and if he have a reasonable prospect of such greater good, he is justified in assenting to the interrogatory. If there be any among the Clergy who might have served their country better as intriguing statesmen, compliant courtiers, intrepid soldiers, busy traders, ingenious artificers, disputatious lawyers, or sturdy ploughmen, I leave them to their own consciences, having nothing to suggest for assisting them in their justification. Nevertheless, I am not so merely speculative as to insist that no temporal considerations nor direction of parents ought to weigh in the scale, being sensible this neither is practicable, nor would be convenient for the public service: therefore, I said, all circumstances considered, for our situation in life, and the authority of superiors are of the provision of Heaven, and consequently deserve to be taken into account as parts of the call, which ought all to be regarded as they may explain and qualify one another. But if all things have not been duly weighed, or if upon the result it still remains visible, that better service might be done in some other course of life, it seems a direct prevarication to pretend a call.

3. Another source of debate sprung from the words Receive the Holy Ghost, which were thought to imply an actual delivery of something: for being in the imperative mood, like the recipe of a physician, and accompanied with a solemn act, they seemed to express a direction to the party to take what was administered to him by such act, and to carry the idea of a certain efficacy transpiring from the fingers of the Bishop upon imposition of hands, which might invigorate the faculties, and infuse powers wanting before. But there are innumerable instances in discourses of all kinds, where the imperative mood is used without any such meaning. When St. Paul began his epistles, or a preacher concludes his sermon, with saying, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be among you all; when we say, God grant or God send; when on parting company we bid one another Good by, which is an abbreviation of God be with you, we have no thought of anything delivered, or of giving directions to receive it: it is no more than a petition or cordial wish, that the thing may happen as we express. So the expression may be understood as if it had run, May you receive that assistance of the Holy Spirit without which no good thing, more especially not this sacred office, can be performed effectually.

But the words being construed as a prayer or wish, does not make it necessary they must have no real effect beside: for the whole solemnity of which this formula is a part, may still operate as a natural means of what is here called the Holy Ghost, by a very useful metonyme of the cause for the effect. We have seen in the last two chapters, that forms, ceremonies, and sensible objects have an efficacy to strike impressions upon the mind, and produce there that disposition and vigour of sentiment which in religious matters is termed Grace. In the commerce of the world, when a man enters upon a new course of life, he considers himself in a new character, assumes different sentiments and forms, a new plan of conduct suitable thereto: the change of character must be completed by degrees, but if there be some solemn act or ceremony accompanying, it will at once give a strong turn to his thoughts, and serve as the leading idea of an association continually introducing the others, connected in train therewith, to his remembrance. For this reason the entrance upon most offices is opened with a formal investiture, from the crowning of the king down to the delivery of the staff to a constable: which though intended likewise as a notification to the public, of the quality and authority of the person, yet by that very

circumstance will have an additional effect upon him, when he reflects in what light he will be considered by others.

In like manner I apprehend the solemnity of investiture in the sacred function of one who considers it as the work whereto he is called of God in the sense a little before explained, and reflects that from thenceforward he will be regarded in a new character by the world, may produce in him a considerable Metanoia, a new turn of mind, a change of sentiments, aims, and schemes, with a calm and steady, but strong determination to conform his whole future conduct thereto: and thus, without magic or miracle, but by natural means, may actually convey what is figuratively called the Holy Ghost, because, without his secret concurrence, the conveyance will not be complete, nor the effect of it durable. But the word receive implies something to be done by the recipient: from whence may be gathered, that as the body and blood in the Sacrament are not verily and indeed taken by the unworthy communicant, so neither is the Holy Spirit received by him who undergoes the ceremony only as a mere form necessary to come at the income of a living.

4. There are some people disturbed at the dignities and revenues established in the Church: if they have so contemptible an opinion of religion as to wish it were utterly lost out of the world, there is good ground for their disturbance. But I will not suppose this of them, and as those who complain loudest are such as would be thought very rational men, they will hardly expect the world should be well instructed by means of extraordinary illuminations, and supernatural impulse imparted to private persons, qualifying them instantaneously for the office: or if the thing were doubtful in speculation, experience testifies what wild work has been made by persons undertaking it upon those pretences. For it is well known the doctrines of religion may be grossly misunderstood and perverted to very mischievous purposes, as well through mere ignorance, indiscretion, or hastiness of zeal, as by design. Therefore the due management of it must be allowed to be a science as difficult to be learned as any that are current in the world, as well deserving to be made the profession of a man's life, and to have a particular education suited thereto.

If we do not think a common artificer well qualified for his business without having served an apprenticeship, surely this, which is a more dangerous edge tool than the saw and the hatchet, requires an early preparation to handle it skilfully. Now if we consider how early the preparation must be begun, and the determination made, between an equipment for the shop or the pulpit, we shall quickly find it necessary that some temporal encouragement should be cast into the scale. It is a great thing, too great to be compassed, for a man mature in years, experience, and judgment, to act invariably with a cheerful industry upon the sole motive of doing service to his fellow-creatures without aid of private interest; for we are but sensitivo-rational animals, incapable of attaining the Stoical love of rectitude for its own sake; to require it of us would be expecting to find us angels instead of men; the highest use we can make of our understanding is to restrain the exorbitances of our desires, and choose such among them as may serve to spur us on in the prosecution of our rational designs.

But nothing of this is to be looked for in a boy who is to go to school or to an apprenticeship, neither is there one in a thousand who makes the option for himself, being generally put upon their line of life by their parents or friends: and even when a lad does take a strong turn himself, if the truth were known, I believe it would appear owing to something constantly

chimed in his ears, rather than his own original choice. But the friends and parents have the temporal advancement of their children in view, grandeur and riches are their incitements: they consider life as a lottery, and would not venture their child in a class where there were no great prizes, for those are the necessary lures to draw in adventurers: if they propose an apprenticeship, it is a step into my Lord Mayor's coach: if the law, they have in view the great purse and the seals; if divinity, they think of the lawn sleeves and the lordship.

It becomes not me to pronounce upon the honours and possessions of the Church, whether they be more ample than necessary, whether properly distributed in proportion to the duties annexed, or whether rightly conferred according to the true intent of their institution. Those are matters belonging to wiser heads and higher powers. All I contend for is, that without temporal encouragements sufficiently inviting to those who have the disposal of young people, labourers would be wanting in the vineyard. I knew a very good man a dissenter, whose son desired to be bred up to the ministry; but he would not let him, because he said there was nothing to be gotten in their way above a hundred pounds a year. Now the talents of the lad were such as, I believe, would scarcely have raised him to a hundred pounds a year, if he had gone upon the established line: but the father thought higher of him; and so I suppose do most fathers.

Therefore if there were not a possibility of some considerable matters, few would be put upon the lists who were not of such unpromising genius, as that even the partiality of their friends could not judge them fit for any thing else; or in such low circumstances as that the bare exemption from bodily labour would be deemed a prize. But if it be thought that any thing can be taught to read over a service intelligibly, yet I hope it will be allowed that some better qualified officers are requisite in the Church militant: for there are so many attacks made against religion, so many misapprehensions and perversions of its doctrines, so many new vices and follies continually starting up, that plodding industry and downright probity alone cannot manage them without acuteness and sagacity of parts improved by a compass of learning. And there is the more need to provide for store of hopeful plants, because out of every score of ingenious boys in the mother's estimation, it is good luck if one turns out an ingenious man when come abroad into the world.

Neither will acuteness of parts and depth of learning answer the purpose completely without aid of other qualifications; men of a scholastic turn are commonly too abstruse and rigid, they cast religion into a form which is fit for nobody's wear but their own: therefore it is requisite there should be some mingled among them, who by a competent knowledge of human nature, of the manners and characters of mankind, may be able to turn the labours of the others to general use, to render speculation practical, and discern what is feasible, as well as what is desirable. But discretion and knowledge of the world are not to be learned at grammar school, nor at college; they must be gotten at home, if gotten at all, from the parents or persons with whom they use familiarly to converse: whence it appears fitting that there should be such prizes in the lottery, as may look tempting in the eye of families where there are opportunities of studying this science.

But lest I should give offence by thus making private interest, ambition, and vanity, the avenues to the sacred function, I shall observe, that this cannot be thought a reflection upon the order in me, who have been as little complaisant to all orders whatever among men: having laid down, that pri-

vate satisfaction is the constant spring of all our actions, that every man's own Good is his proper ultimate end of pursuit; deduced all the virtues, the purest love, and benevolence, from selfishness; and grafted the science of Uranian Venus upon the wild stocks shot up spontaneously in the garden of Nature. For our own desires are mostly of the translated kind, having been transferred from the end to the means, which from thenceforward become an end or ultimate point of view: and a translated desire generally contains a vigour and firmness proportionable to that of the original desire from whence it was transferred: therefore I see nothing should hinder the desire of advancement in the world from serving for a proper stock whereon to graft a solid and genuine piety.

The young adventurer, I suppose, will be exhorted to make himself master in his science for gaining the better credit and success therein: if he have any spirit and industry, he will endeavour to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Religion he is to teach to others; and the principal part of what he is to inculcate being a command of the passions, a preference of future happiness before present advantage, a glowing serenity of hope in the divine Goodness, a sincere attachment to the general interest, and an unreserved charity to all mankind; to press those things by the most animating topics, and enforce them by a justness of reasoning and solidity of argument: he cannot well avoid taking a tincture of them himself in his progress. So that by continual application of his thoughts to those trains he may acquire as much indifference to worldly concerns, as pure a holiness, as strong a love of rectitude, as hearty judicious zeal to do good, as human nature, in this diseased state, and under the circumstances surrounding it, is capable of attaining. And if the student in divinity will ruminate seriously upon what has been suggested above in the second section concerning the call which is to qualify him for admission into the sacred office, I apprehend it will contribute not a little towards making the scion take good hold and imbibe the vigour and succulence of the stock: which being mellowed and meliorated in the passage, may produce a plentiful crop of excellent fruits.

CHAP. XXV.

ARTICLES.

GREAT outcry has been made against imposing articles of belief upon men's consciences, and invading their most inviolable and unalienable rights by denying them even the liberty of thought. One would think the persons who join this clamour were foreigners, who had just gotten some history three hundred years old, and from thence taken their idea of our constitution and polity upon what they read there of the Popish tyranny and persecutions. But I know of no imposition now put upon the conscience, nor fetters attempted to be cast upon the liberty of thought. An English gentleman may believe the world was made by chance, or the moon made of cream cheese, if he pleases: no scrutiny will be taken into his thoughts by the Courts of Justice, nor if discovered will he incur any corporal or pecuniary penalty thereby, since the writ de heretico cumburendo has been taken away. Very true, you say; a man may think what he will, because you cannot hinder him by all the laws you can contrive; but then he must keep his thoughts to himself, and this it seems is a grievous bondage: for

liberty of thought is nothing without liberty of expressing the thoughts upon all occasions, and in all companies.

It may seem surprising, that in a country where liberty is our idol, it should be so little understood: but each man's notion of liberty seems to be an unbounded license for him to do whatever he fancies, without regard to his neighbours or compatriots. Whereas liberty subsists by restraint, therefore if unbounded must necessarily destroy itself; for the law, its only safeguard, operates no otherwise than by penalties restraining from the practices prohibited thereby. The law can give no liberty to any one directly, but by consequence of the restraints it lays upon others: for as two negatives make an affirmative, so the restraining of him who might use his natural or civil power to infringe the rights and liberties of his fellow subjects, preserves them therein. And where they may be invaded by an expression of the thoughts, it is for the interests of liberty to restrain them from being vented. A man may think another dishonest, or write down such opinion in his closet without offending the law: for if somebody should steal away the paper, whereby his sentiments might be proved upon him, I apprehend no conviction could be obtained thereupon. But if he calls him rogue to his face, by way of abuse, or behind his back, to discredit him with other people, this is an infringement of his liberty to enjoy the benefit of a good name, and the tranquillity of his own mind: therefore the law restrains such practices out of its regard to liberty.

2. Nature pours out her produce in common among the whole species: she leaves every man at liberty to gather the fruits of the earth wherever he can find them. This will appear manifest upon imagining a number of persons not bound together by any compact or government, cast upon some uninhabited island: where there would be no prior claim of one person above another, but each would be entitled to make his uses of any thing falling within his reach. It is easy to see what waste and destruction must ensue upon the general exercise of such liberty; how prone the stronger would be to abridge the weaker in their share of it, and how many advantages and conveniences might be procured by the proper limitation of it. These considerations, I apprehend, are the true foundation of order, regulation, and government; which draw men out of the state of Nature to place them in a better state, wherein they may have larger scope of liberty to work out a distant benefit for themselves, without being hindered in their progress or defeated of their purpose by one another.

Thus there are two kinds of liberty: that of Nature, of the savage, and the wild beasts, subject to no restriction, nor control of every present fancy that shall start up; and that of reason and prudence, which cannot subsist without some limitation upon the former, but is much more beneficial, as securing the profits of industry and contrivance, and extensive schemes requiring time to bring their fruits to maturity. For as the road to pleasure lies sometimes through self-denial, so a seasonable restraint is a necessary avenue to a larger extent of our powers and freedom.

Now this latter kind must be had in view by whoever sets up for the champion of liberty, or he betrays the cause he pretends to maintain; for if the essence of liberty be placed in any thing prejudicial to society, it must quickly and deservedly fall into discredit among mankind. They may be perhaps beguiled for a while with the speciousness of a name, but when experience has made them sensible of the evil consequences, it will soon become a name of reproach and abhorrence, as much as ever it was esteemed a privilege and a blessing before; nor is there any thing more dangerous

religious or civil rights, than a mistaken or outrageous zeal for either. Even liberty of conscience respects only the free exercise of those we esteem religious duties, but does not justify us in obstructing other persons in the like exercise of what are judged so by them; for this would be falling into the common error of placing our own liberty in the right of cramping that of our neighbour.

Therefore I can come so near to the exceptionable passage in Tillotson's Sermon upon Joshua xxiv. 15, preached before King Charles II. as to think it no breach of the liberty belonging to private persons to overthrow a form of religion established. For though there are cases wherein this might lawfully be done without waiting for a special commission from heaven authenticated by miracles, yet those cases must be such as shall make the omission of it sinful. A man, to merit excuse for so doing, must believe himself authorized and enjoined thereto by the precepts of the Gospel: so that his act is matter of obligation and necessity, not of liberty, any more than paying his debts, or saving the life of one whom he can rescue from danger. And if the punishment of him be wrong, it is so, not as being an infringement of his natural rights, but as exacting obedience to the commands of men preferable to those of God.

Liberty has commonly been joined with property, as necessarily standing or falling together; but how can a man be said to enjoy his property, or the liberty of making what uses are to be made of it, unless all other persons be restrained from reaping the corn he sows? Nor can there be liberty to pursue any plan, for the benefit of mankind, while there is liberty left to all others to obstruct its operations. And the case is the same with respect to communities, who can no more carry their salutary plans into execution while liable to continual interruption from any quarter, than a private man can avail himself of his property. Therefore the law and the magistrate are armed with authority to restrain the wanton and the selfish from giving such interruption, that so there may be free course for every good provision to take its full effect: the preservation of which free course, and consequently the maintenance of a proper authority, is a species of liberty as much as any other more commonly understood by the name.

Nevertheless it must be owned, that power, either through design or mistake, is sometimes extended further than necessary for the purposes above mentioned, in which case it becomes pernicious to liberty; and then he that can, will merit applause, by refusing submission to it himself, and lessening its influence upon other people. But all opposition upon any other motive, and even upon that motive if hastily taken up without good grounds to support it, must be pronounced licentiousness, refractoriness, or at best, inconsiderateness.

Every impediment thrown against the exercise of a power, whether belonging to private persons or communities, or rulers entrusted by them with authority, comes within the definition of Restraint, and the exemption from it within that of Liberty, but since the powers of men frequently interfere, their operations being incompatible with one another, the interest of liberty will be best supported by securing a free scope to those which are most beneficial. This then is the proper subject of careful examination by such as find themselves prompted to employ the means in their hands for obstructing the schemes and endeavours of others, namely, the consequences expectant upon following or forbearing to follow their impulse; for nothing deserves the name of liberty, from whence more damage than profit will redound upon the whole.

3. One of the most valuable liberties of mankind is that of forming into societies, and enjoying the benefit of regulations made for public order and convenience, whether fallen into by general agreement among themselves, or established by governors to whom the care of making public provisions has been committed by the constitution of the community: and he that should endeavour to propagate opinions tending to disunite or disturb the society, to weaken the authority of those regulations, or hinder the good effects of them, would be an infringer of that liberty, and consequently a proper object for the restraint of the law. Therefore in ascertaining what liberty may be allowed to be taken with the liberty of mankind above mentioned, consideration should be had which of the two liberties is the more valuable, and whether of the restraints is likely to be attended with the greater inconvenience and mischief to the public. But I believe if it were fairly considered how great indulgence is given in this country to every conscientious declaration of a man's sentiments, how large a freedom to all kinds of sober argumentation, and that none other restraints hang over us unless against wantonness, self-conceit, anger, and indiscretion, which may do hurt to the vulgar and unwary: there will be found much less inconvenience in obliging private persons to suppress some of their sparkling notions, than in a general license to throw out indiscriminately whatever comes into their fancies.

We are a religious as well as civil community, and rules have been established for our guidance in both; nor could it be otherwise, for the people will have some imaginations or other concerning the things unseen: if you do not provide them with a rational system, they will run after conjurors, diviners, tales of fairies and apparitions, and lie open to the first crafty or enthusiastic deceiver who thinks fit to take them in hand. For Nature has given us all a propensity to look further than the bare objects of sense, which propensity is capable of being turned to excellent or pernicious purposes: therefore it is highly expedient, that due order should be taken for the management of this, as well as of our other appetites, which are the objects of civil government. And it is likewise fitting, that what order is taken should have the protection of the laws, which are not more scrutinizing into the sentiments upon matters of Religion, than of civil polity: for no man is allowed to say whatever he pleases of the latter.

If there be any man so wrong-headed as to fancy the privilege of certain persons against the common process of law for their debts unjust, and oppressive upon the subject; while he keeps his notion to himself, nobody will question him about it: or if he happens to drop it inadvertently, I suppose no notice would be taken; but if he takes pains to publish and maintain it in the world, he would very soon be had up before his betters, and incur the censure of that house whom we all regard as the guardians and protectors of our liberties, as well of thinking as acting. But what more is desired on behalf of the Church, than that if any man entertains an opinion subversive of her doctrines, he should keep it to himself, and not endeavour to propagate it in public?

4. Nothing need be urged here to prove the expedience of inculcating a sense of Religion among the people; but multitudes want either capacity or leisure to think sufficiently upon this subject, of themselves: they may pass some judgment upon particular points or arguments proposed to them, but could never form a complete and consistent system: greater multitudes would bestow very little thought upon it, unless continually reminded or exhorted thereto; and none have any judgment of their own so early as it

is necessary to imbue them with principles to be the foundation of their future reasonings. Therefore the polity of a nation would be defective, if there were no provision made for instructing the ignorant, warning the thoughtless, and educating children: but how can such provision be made, without a summary of doctrine and set of articles composing the system to be taught? For would you have a law enacted that the people shall be duly instructed, and that parents should educate their children, without giving the least direction in what manner, or upon what points the instruction and education shall be carried on? This would be leaving mankind in their state of Nature, and withholding that benefit of a community which might be procured by persons in public character, whose extensive views and large information may enable them to discern what is expedient for the generality, and guard against specious notions drawing pernicious consequences, not foreseen by persons in private station.

In the infancy of a Religion the principles of it may be few; but when those few come to be branched out by comments, inferences, and corrollaries, grafted thereupon, some of them perversions and corruptions from the originals, it will be necessary to make a more copious provision for correcting those enormities. We ought to presume the compilers of our Articles framed such as in their judgment contained the soundest system of religion, and most expedient for instilling salutary sentiments into the minds of the people. As they were men, they certainly were not infallible; and in articles prepared for national use, there may possibly be something occasional, not necessary for the maintenance of true Religion at all times, but calculated upon the condition of the present: if anything of this sort should appear, there is a legislator always in being who may rectify whatever, upon proper examination, might be found amiss, and accommodate what might be judged unsuitable to the temper and occasions of our own times.

And for the manner of understanding them, this may be and has been accommodated to the current ways of thinking, by tacit consent of the people themselves: for whoever will examine the writings of the last century, comparing them with those of our cotemporaries, may perceive, that although we still retain the same set of articles, we find in them much less of the mysterious, the marvellous, and the magical, than our forefathers did a hundred years ago. Therefore I hope it will be allowed a lawful and honest intention, however defectively executed, with which I go through my present labours: for implicit faith will not go down now-a-days: men are not easily silenced without being convinced, nor will they be made to swallow mysteries, to them unintelligible, by the drenching-horn of ecclesiastical authority. It is then working in service of the Church to endeavour showing, that without change of a single word in her doctrines, they may be so expounded as to render them consistent with the discoveries of Reason and Philosophy, and to bear standing a close inspection by the light of Nature.

If the system of doctrines established is believed beneficial by those who have in charge to make provision for the public welfare in all its parts, it is natural and incumbent upon them to have the benefit secured by the protection of laws; and this is all that is had in view: for if the vulgar, who want the aid of public provisions most, are not disturbed in the enjoyment of them by jokes and sophisms, and other attacks upon things recommended to them as sacred, the law is satisfied. It makes no inquisition into men's private sentiments, nor discourses among their friends or in their families, nor whether they breed up their children in orthodox principles; neither

does it prohibit the publication of works not perfectly reconcilable with orthodoxy, provided they do not directly tend to shake the popular tenets. For Berkeley's denial of body, space, and motion, Hartley's performing all human action by the mechanical impulse of vibratiuncles, and Burnet's theory of the earth, must, I doubt, be counted heterodox by a rigid believer in the thirty-nine articles: yet they never fell under the lash of the law, nor even suffered in their reputation of being good men and pious Christians.

As for those things which some affect to call persecutions, they are civil and not ecclesiastical provisions: Tythes and Church rates are not levied upon the Quaker by authority of the Articles, but of the common and statute laws. The former of those payments are sometimes lay estates, wherein the church has no concern: and it is easy to see how ruinous it must prove, so far as to unstring the very sinews of government, if the plea of conscience was admitted to exempt any man from the payment of money. You would find a sect spring up in the home counties, who would pronounce all taxes unjust that are not equally laid: so because the northern and western parts contribute a small proportion to the land tax, it would go against their consciences to pay any. Others would quote the Craftsman and Johnson's dictionary to prove all excises wicked things: therefore would scruple submitting to any upon their malt, or their beer. In short, we should grow so squeamishly conscientious, that the Parliament would never be able to find ways and means for raising the supplies without the severities of a persecution.

The discouragements cast upon the Papists were designed for security of the state, not upon account of their religious principles: and if the dissenters are accidentally involved in some of them, it is not a clog upon their liberty of thinking or acting, but only an exclusion from places of profit or trust. Nor does it prove a bar to the most sensible among them, who consequently are fittest to serve the public; for we find they can conform occasionally, just enough to satisfy the law. As for others, who are not likely to be ever the better if the bar were taken off, I would entreat them to examine whether it is really conscience the bar lies against: for there are other springs of action that will veil themselves under the appearance of conscience. The heart of man is deceitful above all things, extremely hard to be fathomed even by the owner, so as to distinguish the true motives of proceeding upon every occasion, from plausible colourings occurring in justification of them. There is an attachment to the customs one has been bred up in, a shame of departing from old acquaintance, a fear of incurring their secret dislike, a trouble and awkwardness at being put out of one's way by new forms: and the reluctance springing from those causes may easily be mistaken for scruples of conscience.

Nor is it so likely that conscience should interfere in the case now as in former times; for when a superstitious value was placed in externals, it might go against the conscience to countenance the superstition by joining in the use of them; but now that nobody regards them otherwise than as expedients for decency and order, the superstition lies on the other side in imagining them to contain an intrinsic depravity which will vitiate the purest devotions of the heart: therefore it must be a very particular constitution of conscience that should make it boggle at them. I do not urge this with a desire that either the public or private persons should interfere in matters of conscience: I only mean to exhort every man to study carefully his own motives, and know what are those which really actuate him: for there are frequent and flagrant mistakes committed in the world upon this article

And since I suppose it will be acknowledged that a voluntary, not compulsive uniformity of Religion would be a desirable thing, it behoves every man to consider how far the regard to old friends, old customs and habits, will justify him in forbearing to contribute his part towards so desirable an event: the judgment belongs to none other than to himself, only let him make it maturely upon thorough and impartial examination of the cause.

But why should we complain of the laws in force for preservation of our Religion, when those made for the security of the state go a great deal further, yet without affording a handle for finding fault to the most zealous asserters of liberty? for our political creed is more narrowly scrutinized into than our religious: inquisition is made there into our private sentiments and the secret thoughts of our heart. It is not enough to behave quietly and submissively under all lawful commands of the magistrate, to make no endeavours to propagate an opinion contrary to the act of Settlement, nor even drop a word in disparagement thereof: but we are called upon solemnly and sincerely to declare upon oath, that without any equivocation, mental evasion, or secret reservation whatsoever, we do believe in our conscience the Pretender has not any right to the crown of this realm. It will not suffice that we never try to persuade anybody, nor maintain either in writing or discourse, that Princes deprived by the Pope may be deposed: but are required to swear, that we do from our heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, that damnable doctrine and position.

The law in both cases will not rest contented with obliging people to keep their thoughts to themselves; but insists upon knowing whether they are orthodox, and that under penalty of being subject to double taxes. Observe further, that this last declaration may seem, in some people's understanding, to contain a matter of mere opinion: for they may conceive that declaring a thing damnable upon oath, is the same as swearing they believe every man must be damned who holds it. Now though it is certainly of concern to the state whether an English subject holds this position himself, yet it seems a mere speculative question, whether he believes that all other persons, whatsoever and wheresoever, who do hold it, shall assuredly be damned for their impiety and heresy.

5. Having taken notice of this eagerness of style we are enjoined to use in the most solemn expression of our loyalty, I shall venture a short comment upon it: not merely by way of dissertation, but as leading into a clearer understanding of what little I have further to offer upon the subject of this Chapter. It would be highly irreverent to suppose the wisdom of the nation could be so possessed with a paroxysm of zeal, as, like a common swearer, to throw out a string of passionate words without weighing their import; therefore we must seek for some rational meaning in the epithet Damnable.

As openness of heart is now universally and justly esteemed an honour to the possessor, we may without offence suppose the legislature did not themselves believe that every poor villager in Spain and Portugal, bred up from his cradle under the Jesuits, who should really believe in his conscience that the Pope had full power ecclesiastical and temporal over all nations upon earth, would certainly go to the Devil for that error: therefore could never intend, that by calling the position damnable, we should understand it must necessarily damn every person without exception who should be deluded into it. But we must presume they regarded the doctrines contained in the Act of Settlement as necessary to the salvation of

the State, and the Papal authority here so palpably absurd and groundless a notion, that noboby in this enlightened country could entertain it without his judgment being blinded by some party madness, or private interest, or seditiousness and turbulence of disposition, or other damnable perverseness, inconsistent with that temper of mind which is our preparation for future happiness: and they judged it expedient for the public security, to throw a discouragement upon all who would not declare the same upon oath.

Upon this construction it appears that our Governors concerned themselves solely with preserving the peace and safety of the constitution, and with the sentiments of persons under their jurisdiction, nor had any thought of foreigners, nor of deciding what doctrines and positions might be fatal or innocent to them: why then may not we understand the Church with the like restriction, where she pronounces upon an article of Faith? For those who clamour against her as an enemy to liberty, object, that besides the sanction of laws restraining them from gaining the superlative credit they might raise by their wit and shrewdness; she endeavours to blast their character in the world by teaching her children to condemn them as reprobates devoted to eternal perdition: therefore, they must be careful to keep their tongue between their teeth, lest if they should drop out a disrespectful word against any form or ceremony, or unintelligible theorem esteemed sacred, they should be thought wicked men capable of everything bad. And this they call an infringement upon the liberty of thought, because I suppose they have such an incontinence of tongue, as to render it unsafe for them to think what they must not utter.

But if they meet with this treatment from anybody, why should they charge it upon the Church? for they may well know that children will get many notions in their heads they were never taught by their masters: and they ought to be the more candid in this case, because they themselves are liable to the like infirmity of judging hardly of others for an article of belief; for if they hear anybody drop a word in favour of miracle, prophecy, or revelation, or use the words Faith, Grace, Sanctification, or the like, seriously, they presently know him to be a weak man, half-witted, capable of being persuaded into anything silly, and undeserving to be dealt with as a rational creature; which is their kind of anathema.

But the Church, like our temporal Governors, must be presumed to concern herself only with those under her authority: she decides nothing concerning the Turks or Tartars, or others out of her pale. It became her to enjoin the cultivation of such sentiments as she esteemed salutary to persons who would listen to her, to point out such as would overthrow the good purposes intended by them, and to warn against any who might discover a disposition to insinuate notions contrary to those she had recommended. This is no more than what I suppose our objectors themselves would do: they would instruct their pupils in some system of opinions; would tell them, This is a useful principle necessary to be kept in mind, This is a fatal mistake, This a pernicious absurdity; and would caution them against persons instilling opposite notions. Therefore her children may learn from her to stand upon their guard against opinions she condemns as heretical, and against persons who give just cause to suspect their being infected with them: If they go further to pronounce upon the persons themselves, in what condition they stand with respect to their own salvation, it is an excursion of their own beyond the bounds prescribed them, for they have no warrant from her for so doing.

6. The harshest expression I can recollect, is that used in the eighteenth

article, where is declared, that those are to be holden accursed who presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth; but why should we give the Accursed here a larger compass than the Damnable in the oath of abjuration? or understand any more thereby, than that he should have her members look upon it as a pernicious and fatal error, to imagine the choice of one's Religion a matter of indifference, to be made at pleasure lightly, or upon temporal convenience, amongst all that are current in the world; and would have them shy of persons attempting to justify that error, as dangerous persons for them to converse with.

Nor yet is this a decision of her own making, but a repetition of that made in the Gospel, which declares, He that believeth is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. Now in order to determine the latitude of the word Accursed in the article, let us go to the fountain head, and examine whether the condemnation in the Gospel be so rigid as to extend to all persons whatever, who are not Christians. In the first place I presume it will be admitted, that the Scriptures were given solely for our instruction in matters of faith and practice, not to satisfy our curiosity upon points of speculation: now I conceive it to be a matter of mere speculation, no ways affecting our interests, what shall be the fate of any other man in the next world; therefore we are to look for no information there, nor construe anything therein as decision upon that point. But if this be not enough, let us turn back to the verse immediately preceding, where we may find that God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

We learn from St. Paul, that God left not the heathen world without a witness of himself, having manifested his eternal Power and Godhead by the things that were seen, and that the Gentiles, not having the law, were a law unto themselves by means of that written in their hearts; but a law implies some benefit to be obtained by obedience thereto, nor have we any foundation to imagine, the Gentiles before Christ might not find acceptance with God. If then he sent not his Son to condemn the world, they could not be put into a worse condition than they were in before; and if he sent him to save the world, observe, the world is here used collectively, and since, as I have shown in the Chapter on Divine Economy and elsewhere, there is a general interest of the species, and a progress of human nature towards perfection, faith in Christ may be necessary for the salvation of mankind, and yet not necessary for that of every particular person. Or should it be proved universally necessary, still those arguments deserve consideration which I have offered in the Chapter on Redemption, to show that an opportunity may be given for embracing it in the next world to such as had none afforded them here.

Then if we go on to the next verse following, we shall see what are the grounds of censure, and who the persons incurring it. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. Here appears to be a voluntary choice made between darkness and light, by persons severally conscious of evil or good deeds; but the good deeds spoken of two verses below, as being manifested by the light, must be such as were performed before coming thereinto: therefore it is possible that persons not in the light may do good works wrought in God, and consequently be good men accepted before him. Since then a criminal infidelity must be a wilful rejection of the light because

of evil deeds, we can never know a man's character merely by his creed, even among persons who converse daily with Christians; for there are so many various ways of conception, so many absurdities and corruptions sometimes fastened upon our holy Religion by its professors, as may turn it into a darkness impenetrable by the most careful eye. Nor unless we could pry into the heart to discern all the motives operating there, can we safely pronounce upon any man, whether he refuses to come into the light of free choice, or through misapprehension and invincible ignorance.

It is necessary for our own security to judge upon actions and sentiments, that we may know how to take our measures properly, and what degree of vigilance to apply for, avoiding such as would be poisonous to us, in proportion to their degree of virulence. But there are wide differences as well in the mental as bodily constitutions of men; and as poisons are some of the vital juices in scorpions, vipers, and many animals, so there may be men in whom poisonous opinions are innocent, or even contributive to their health of mind; but it is our duty to think the best of every one. For the same God who created the glorious stars in their constellations, created also the crooked serpent, whom we must therefore believe complete in his nature and useful in the situation wherein he is placed: for when God looked upon all the works that he had made, behold they were very good. It behoves us then to beware both of the natural and metaphorical serpent, to keep out of his way lest he bite us; but we have nothing to do with the light wherein he stands before his Maker.

Therefore what severe expressions we read against the Scribes and Pharisees, and others, we must presume were given the Jewish converts for the hardness of their hearts, because they were too gross to distinguish in their aversions between the man and his opinions; but it was not so from the beginning, that is, not in the original design of the Gospel. And we may say to the rigid and censorious, as Jesus did to the disciples who wanted to call down fire from Heaven, Ye know not what spirit ye are of: certainly not the spirit of Christianity, which is a doctrine of peace and love, and of that Charity which believeth all things, hopeth all things, and thinketh no evil. So it is no proof of our orthodoxy, that we are forward to judge other persons, but a direct opposition both to the spirit and the letter of the Gospel; for it is one of the precepts in the sermon upon the mount, Judge not, that ye be not judged: and if there be any practice deserving our detestation as impious, heretical, and damnable, surely this must be so, which Christ has expressly declared will draw down judgment upon the practisers.

CHAP. XXVI.

DOING ALL FOR THE GLORY OF GOD.

We have now traversed the holy ground of Religion, taking with us the candle of Reason to assist in discovering those spots that had been obscured by error, misapprehension, and injudicious zeal: we have found all the Buildings there erected upon the basis of human nature, calculated to supply its most pressing wants, and so contrived as to join in one uniform plan with the structures of soundest Philosophy. We have adventured, but with reverential and cautious boldness, to approach the sacred mysteries,

have minutely examined the theological Virtues, which are the sum of all the law and the prophets, and I may add of the Gospel too, traced the divine economy along the steps taken for perfecting the human species, and inquired into the nature and efficacy of those called divine services, and of the ritual, endeavouring to clear them from the idea of magic and arbitrary command, too frequently annexed by the ill designing, or the unwary. It is now time to issue forth from the sanctuary into the open world, that we may there exemplify in our practice the good sentiments we have stored up in our hearts: for we have seen that divine services are not righteousness in themselves, they are only if duly performed the sure means of attaining it, and necessary expedients for keeping it alive; even Faith, though the sole saving principle, is better strengthened by works done in pursuance of its impulses, than by any devotions or meditations whatsoever.

And the very precept which I have taken for the text of this Chapter, though at first sight it may appear to attach us more closely to our religious exercises, yet upon a nearer inspection will be found relative to our commerce in the busy world. For we cannot live always in a Church, we cannot pass our whole time in hymns and hallelujahs; the supplies of our natural wants demand a share of our attention, the care of our families, the duties of our calling, the defence of our persons, properties, and characters against injuries and dangers, and the intercourse among mankind must not be neglected.

If then we are to do all things for the Glory of God, we must learn to do these things for that end; for since they must be done, if we have not that principle to actuate us in the doing, we shall fall defective of our obedience: hence it becomes a considerable part of Religion to study how we may fulfil what we owe to the divine Glory in the common transactions of life; a harder science to be attained, than that of paying our devotions rightly at the altar. For here the solemnity of the place, and all around us, help to lift our hearts to heaven, and nothing more is needful than vigilance to keep our thoughts attentive to their object; but to sanctify our business, our conversations, our pleasures, to keep steady along the line of our grand aim when there are a thousand by-objects soliciting on all sides, this is a difficult task to manage; so difficult, that to many it will seem impossible.

For they will be apt to say it is not in human nature to have God always in the thoughts: dangers, pressing necessities, and urgent engagements will force our whole attention from us, the transactions of the world severally require a train of imagination peculiar to themselves, familiar conversation and necessary recreation are not of a nature to mingle with heavenly ideas. All this is very true, but why should they think it necessary, that to do all things for the Glory of God we must have him always in the thoughts? I can see no reason for such an apprehension unless from the injudicious zeal of some writers, who seem to require perpetual devotion of mind even in the most trifling employments. Whether they really mean so much as they express I cannot take upon me to determine, their admirers will not allow them capable of this extravagance, but insist they are to be understood with some restrictions: if so, they are surely to blame for not having marked out those restrictions, for the strain wherein they talk of a devout intention running through all our actions universally, is enough to make an unwary reader imagine he is to buckle his shoes, to wash his hands, to call for the newspaper at a coffee-house, with a direct intention

of pleasing God thereby, or they will be so many sins and desertions of his service.

But besides that such incessant adoration is utterly impracticable, it would be mischievous in many cases; for there are vile and trivial offices whereto we are subjected unavoidably by the condition of our nature, as has been already observed in the Chapters on Purity and Majesty, among which to introduce a thought of God must tend greatly to his dishonour, as defiling and debasing the idea of him in our hearts. Thus it is so far from being a duty to have him always in contemplation, that our duty obliges us to banish such thoughts as would intrude upon some occasions, wherein to give them reception would be highly irreverent, and a direct breach of the third commandment: for it is not for the bare sound of words uttered, but for the intemperance of mind giving vent to them, that none will be holden guiltless who taketh the name of the Lord in vain.

2. Nevertheless we are taught, Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God; and reason joins in with the dictates of authority to add her sanction to this precept. The Stoics held, that the wise or perfect man would act right because it was right, and therefore would act invariably so, for there is a right and a wrong in every minutest action: he then to whom rectitude is the sole motive, will pursue it in trifles as well as matters of moment: but the unwise, though many times doing right things, never act rightly, because they do them upon some other motive without which they would have omitted them, having no immediate love of rectitude for its own sake.

We have found in the course of this work, that rectitude has not a substantiality or distinct essence of its own, but subsists in the relation to happiness, those actions being right which upon every occasion tend most effectually to happiness. We have acknowledged that God can receive no benefit at our hands, not the least accession of pleasure, or power, or dominion, or greatness from our services, yet is he jealous of his glory, because the glorifying him aright is of the utmost importance to the good of his creatures. It is true there have been many pernicious and destructive things done under pretence of glorifying him, but those were the errors of superstition and intemperate zeal; and so there have been errors in Philosophy and intemperate zeal for virtue, which have caused great mischiefs: but whatever is really and truly done for the Glory of God, advances the happiness of the performer and of his fellow-creatures, and thereby becomes the fundamental rule of rectitude.

But whoever possesses a full and lively sense of the divine Glory, which we have before called the saving Faith, will manifest it in his conduct by a constant readiness to do the Will of God in all things; whereby must not be understood doing the things he is willing should be done, for that we all do without intermission: but doing them upon the motive of their being his Will. For nothing ever befalls throughout the universe without the appointment or permission of our heavenly Father; therefore, when we sin, we do what he was willing should be done, because he was able to have prevented us, and his permission of the sin proves him willing to let our wickedness take its course, and is an evidence that some great good will accrue therefrom to the universe, redounding to his glory. Hence it appears, that we cannot be said to do the Will of God unless when we act upon that intention, when we choose one out of several actions in our power, as being in our judgment apprehended most agreeable in his sight,

and most conducive to his glory, of anything we can turn our hands to at present: and whoever could act invariably throughout all parts of his conduct upon this motive, how small soever were his natural talents and acquired accomplishments, would be that perfect or wise man imagined by the Stoics, but never yet found, except once, among the Sons of Adam.

It remains to be explained, how we can act always with intention to do the will of God without having him always in our thoughts, or how can we pursue an end without holding it in contemplation during every step of the pursuit: and this way we may quickly learn by reflecting on the narrowness of our own comprehension, which is seldom capable of retaining the whole plan of a design while attentive to the measures requisite for completing it. If we may pass a conjecture upon the blessed spirits above, component parts of the mundane soul, they probably never lose sight of their Maker for a moment; because their understanding is so large, that at the same glance it can extend to the attributes, to the plan of Providence flowing from thence, and to all the minute objects requisite for their direction in performing the parts allotted them in the execution of it: so that while busied in giving motion to little particles of matter for carrying on the courses of nature, they can discern the uses of what they do, its tendency to uphold the stupendous order of the universe, and happiness of the creatures wherein God is glorified.

But our understandings are far less capacious, wherefore our prospects are scanty, and of those lying within our compass there is only one small spot in the centre that we can discern clearly and distinctly, so are forced to turn our eye successively to the several parts of a scene before us to take the necessary guidance for our measures. When we have fixed upon the means requisite for effecting a purpose, our whole attention to them is often little enough to carry us through in the prosecution, and were we perpetually to hold the purpose in contemplation, it must interrupt and might utterly defeat its own accomplishment. He that travels to London must not keep his eye continually gazing upon Paul's steeple, nor his thoughts ruminating upon the business he is to do, or pleasures he is to take there: he must mind the road as he goes along, he must look for a good inn, and take care to order accommodations and refreshments for himself and his horse. But whatever steps we take in prosecution of some end, are always ascribed thereto as to their motive, and we are said in common propriety of speech to act all along with intention to gain our end, though we have it not every moment in view. So if our traveller come to town upon a charitable design to succour some family in affliction or distress by his counsel, his company, his labours, his interest, or any other seasonable assistance, his whole journey and every part of it, while inquiring the way, while bustling through a crowd, while baiting at the inn, was an act of charity performed with a benevolent intention.

In like manner whatever schemes we lay out upon the principle of glorifying God by promoting the happiness of his creatures or any one of them, whether they lead us to the care of our health, or our properties, to common business, or recreation, we may be truly and properly said to act with intention to his will, though during the prosecution we should be totally immersed in worldly concerns, and taken up with sensible objects.

When busied in my chapters, labouring to trace the mazes of Providence, and show that in the severest dispensations they never terminate upon evil, how defective soever the performance, the intention seems to be good: after toiling awhile the ideas begin to darken, the mental organs to grow stiff,

and the spirits exhausted; I then perceive the best thing I can do for proceeding on my work, is to lay in a fresh stock by some exercise or diversion, which may enable me to resume the microscope and telescope with recruited vigour. So I sally forth from my cavern in quest of any little amusement that may offer: perhaps there is an exhibition of pictures; I gaze round like Cymon at Iphigenia, with such judgment as uninstructed nature can supply: I meet with my acquaintance; one being a connoisseur in painting, entertains me with criticisms founded upon the rules of art, which come in at one ear and go out at the other; others tell me of the weather, of general warrants, of a very clever political pamphlet, a rhapsody of Rousseau's, or a slanderous poem, which because I am a studious man and a lover of wit they recommend to my perusal: I endeavour to join in the conversation as well as my penury of fashionable materials will permit, and cut such jokes as I can to enliven it. If an interval happens wherein there is nothing to engage my senses, presently the mundane soul, and links of connection forming the general interest, will be attempting to intrude upon me, but I shut them out with might and main, for fear they should draw off the supply of spirits as fast as it comes in: for recreation is now my business, and the sublimest idea which might draw on a labour of thought would defeat my purpose. Nevertheless, while engaged in this series of trifles, am I not pursuing my main intention, even in the very efforts made for thrusting it out of my sight? and if my first design bore any reference to the divine glory, may not I be said without impropriety still to act for the same end more effectually than if I had passed the time in thought-straining fervours of prayer and devotion?

3. Since then whatever under purposes branch out from one principle, and were taken up because conducive thereto, are esteemed parts of that, and everything done with a view to accomplish them is done for the main end whereto they conduct; since the ability, instruments, materials, and opportunities for performing the most important services we are capable of, depend much upon the condition of body and spirits, upon external accommodations and conveniences, and upon our intercourse among mankind; and since upon every trivial occasion there is a right and a wrong choice to be taken, some little present accession or remote advance to be made towards increasing the stock of happiness in the creation, wherein the divine glory is manifested: I conceive it possible in theory, that a man may lay out his whole plan of conduct, his common actions and amusements, as well as his devotions and exercises of virtue, upon that one foundation, the glory of God. So that in the business of his profession, in the management of his family, in the cares of his health, in his contracts and his contentions, in his familiar conversations, his diversions and pleasures, whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, he may be truly said to do all with intention to please God, though he has him not always in his thoughts; provided the several intentions he successively pursues became such upon an opinion of their being the properest measures could then be taken for contributing towards that principal end.

But before I begin to explain my notion in what manner this may be done, I shall premise two observations, very needful to be kept in mind for our better success in the attempt. One, that such perfect holiness of life, although possible in theory, I do not apprehend feasible in practice: the other, that we shall make a nearer approach by considering it as a desirable advantage, than being driven to it by fear as an indispensable obligation.

We cannot get so entire mastery over our passions and appetites, but

they will often impel to action without waiting for our command, and many times we have not understanding to discern what relation our present proceedings bear to our principal concern, so must take guidance from inferior rules and desires, or shall stand wholly inactive. Wherefore it is commonly supposed, that our provisions for this world and for the next, have their distinct provinces belonging separately to each; sometimes we are to labour for one, and sometimes for the other: for to make one in every single instance subservient and aiding to the other, however conceivable in speculation and desirable in idea, is beyond the skill of mortal man to compass. This must be acknowledged true: for my part, I cannot pretend to come near it, nor do I know the man that does; but we have all reason enough to join in the confession, We have not done those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us. To what purpose, then, may it be said, is a plan of conduct requiring the soundest vigorous health prescribed to us, who can never expect to execute it with our infirm diseased constitutions? To this purpose, because by constant diligence we may rectify some of the disorders in our spiritual body, and since we know not in what particulars that may be capable of amendment, it behoves us to try in all, and extend our aim beyond our expectation, for so we are warranted to do by the best approved authorities.

The Stoics proposed their consummate Wise-man for their model, which yet they owned was an ideal character nobody could come up to: we Christians are taught to look up to the perfect pattern of unsinning obedience, of endurance and forbearance in all trials, which our master has set before us, who has likewise expressly enjoined us to be perfect, as our Father which is in heaven is perfect. Which absolute perfection cannot be an indispen sable duty necessary to Salvation, because it far exceeds our forces, and whatever is impossible to compass, cannot be a duty, but is propounded only as a constant object of our wish and desire. Therefore we need not be terrified on finding ourselves fall short of it, nor uneasily anxious for the success of our endeavours: for an over-solicitude retards the speed and misguides the judgment. Accordingly we find that those who proceed under the strongest ideas of obligation to perpetual holiness, too frequently mistake the essence of it, which they place in continual fervours of devotion, and extraordinary exercises of virtue, despising the common transactions of life as unworthy their notice: by which means the greatest part of their time, unavoidably spent in worldly concerns, appears lost to them, and they find very few portions of it wherein they can be conscious of proceeding upon the motive of their duty. Whereas if they had a well-grounded persuasion, that the Glory of God and happiness of the creatures were convertible terms, everything well and truly done for the one being done for the other, they would pursue them as matters of inclination and profit, rather than of command and duty, which of course must banish fear, for so long as a man can proceed upon an habitual, sincere desire of pleasing God, he need never stand in fear of the devil; and their minds would be more at ease to examine the remote tendencies of their actions, and discover little profits to be made of those which are not productive of greater.

Thus the idea with which we shall be likely to make the largest progress in our work is this, to esteem absolute perfection an invaluable treasure, the ultimate object of our wishes, but without expectation of ever attaining or even making any large strides towards it, yet fond of every little advance that can be made thereto as a profit gained: for this will always be the case

with him who has any purpose strongly at heart, if he despairs of effecting it completely, he will be vigilant, industrious, and joyful to compass it partly, in every instance where he can.

It is commonly said, a trader will never grow rich who despises small gains; and with equal truth it may be said the man will never grow virtuous who despises small accessions to his virtue. Therefore as we are taught to learn prudence from the unjust steward, in like manner we may take the wise of this world for our standard, whereby to try the sincerity of our love of rectitude, or zeal for the divine glory. The merchant enters upon his traffic without bounds to his wishes, he would be glad to get a million if he could, but judging that impossible, he fixes his expectations lower: he pursues them without anxious solicitude which would not help him forward, nor does he think himself undone if he should fall short of them; nevertheless, if an opportunity chances to offer for surpassing them, he will embrace it joyfully, for he proceeds by desire, not by fear; and his desires will keep him attentive to all advantages for improving his fortune, making the most of such as are present, when greater do not fall in his way. So the man who seeks to make a fortune in heaven will wish to become a Saint, or an Angel, if it were possible; but knowing this far above his strength, he will not expect to run extraordinary lengths, nor give himself over for lost if he should fail of them: for being persuaded that all good things proceed originally from the divine bounty, he will rest content with whatever portion as well of spiritual as temporal estate the courses of nature or Providence shall put into his power to acquire: yet being sensible the acquisition must be of his own making, his content will not abate his industry, which is not the less for being void of such solicitude as might obstruct its operations; if opportunities unexpectedly offer for making great improvements, he will pursue them eagerly; when no considerable profit accrues, he will contrive how to turn whatever lies before him to some account the best whereof it is capable. For where the treasure is there the heart will be also; and where the heart points, thither the feet will be moving forwards by any passage that opens.

4. Having laid down these preliminary cautions, I shall now proceed to draw out my notion of the perfect Wise-man or christian Sage, acting always invariably for the Glory of God, which yet I acknowledge an ideal character, not to be found exemplified in any corner of the earth; and shall endeavour to trace the steps by which he arrives at such perfection, wherein I do not pretend to speak upon experimental knowledge, but only in speculation, as describing the progress through a country I never saw.

His first step I apprehend must be by a thorough conviction of his judgment, that acting for the divine Glory is acting most for his own benefit: for while he pursues that end because continually chimed in his ears, because it will raise his character above the rest of mankind, because he shall incur the divine vengeance by neglecting it, custom, or vanity, or fear, is his real motive, and the Will of God only a secondary aim subservient to the others. Those motives may be expedient and necessary for rousing the thoughtless to a sense of their duty, but they are only avenues leading into the right way, nor is any man set in it until he can proceed with a hearty desire of advancing therein, without other incitement to drive him: which desire cannot be acquired without his being perfectly satisfied, that it will conduct to happiness more effectually than any other way he can take.

For I have observed all along, that Self lies at the bottom of everything we do; in all our actions we constantly pursue the Satisfaction expectant

on something apprehended beneficial in our judgment, or soothing in our fancy: the purest affections grow from one or other of those roots, and the sublimest of our virtues must be engrafted upon the former; therefore the love of God, to be sincere and vigorous, must spring from the settled opinion of his goodness and beneficence, and that every act of conformity to his will is beneficial to the performer.

Now to have this foundation firm and stable, it will be necessary to examine the ground whereon it lies; such as are so happy as to repose an entire confidence in the dictates of authority, are taught from thence that God will love those who love him, and will give them unspeakable rewards with his own hands in proportion to the endeavours wherewith they have strove to live in constant obedience to his commands. But there may be some persons less pliant to conviction, desirous of having the doctrines taught them explained, and corroborated by human reason, and believing God the Author of universal Nature, which he wanted neither power nor intelligence to plan out in such manner as should answer all his purposes in every minute particular, they may think it more consonant with this idea to suppose, that reward accrues by natural consequence of the provisions made in the original constitution of things, than that it should be conferred directly by an occasional act of Omnipotence.

If there be anything in the foregoing sheets conducive towards explaining how this may come to pass by means of the spiritual body and the general interests, it will deserve their consideration: but by whatever process they arrive at their conclusion, it will behove them to proceed calmly and cautiously, that there be no breaks nor weak places in the line, to examine well their several deductions to see they follow closely and evidently from one another. This conviction being well established, there need no longer be retained any thought of Self: for it is not uncommon in the investigations of reason, for assent to pass by translation from the premises to the conclusion, which from thenceforward takes the nature of a self-evident truth, assented to upon inspection without aid of any proofs to support it: and so desire is frequently translated from an end to the means believed certainly conducive towards it, which thenceforth become an immediate object of desire, exciting an appetite thereto without thought of the end that first made them desirable. Therefore in whomsoever the translation is perfectly formed by having thoroughly satisfied his judgment, that consulting the divine glory is consulting his own truest interests, the latter object may safely be discarded as superfluous and cumbersome to his thoughts, amd following of course upon the former, which he will take up as his ruling principle of action, the main intention wherein all his schemes and contrivances centre.

5. But bare conviction, how well soever established in the understanding, will not suffice, as resting in speculation alone; for it is apt to grow languid and feeble by time or be overwhelmed by continual converse among objects of a different kind, and it is notorious we have often a very faint sense of things we are fully convinced in our judgments to be true. Therefore the next step in the progress towards perfection I conceive must be, by turning the conviction into an habitual and lively persuasion, possessing the imagination strongly with what was evident to the understanding before; by which way only it will become a practical principle of action.

For persuasion is the spring that constantly actuates our conduct; our pleasures, our pains, and our desires; except the few excited immediately

by sensations, arise from an imagination that the thing desired will prove satisfactory in the possession, which gives a present pleasure in advance made towards it, and an uneasiness on being obstructed in our passage. And though many of our common desires are delusive, because fixing upon objects that will not prove satisfactory when obtained, yet while apprehended satisfactory they will have the same effect upon our mind and our motions, as if they were really so.

Now persuasion in matters relative to Religion is termed Faith, as I have already explained in the Chapter upon that article: when following upon the best use of what understanding we have, it is a right and saving Faith; when built upon prejudice, passion, or vanity, it is a false faith, a superstition, or heresy. Therefore the judgment being well satisfied of the universal dominion of Providence, of the divine Goodness ordering all things for the greatest happiness of the creation, of the connection of interests among the creatures, that doing the Will of God with intention so to do is incomparably more advantageous than doing it accidentally and unknowingly, that every act of such doing will redound to some benefit of the performer, and that the tendency of actions to the greater good or pleasure of our fellow-creatures here upon earth is our sure direction to know what is agreeable to his Will; these points having gained full credit in the understanding, the business will be to acquire a strong and steadfast faith in them, that they may rise spontaneously to the imagination with a striking vigour and unreserved assent; from whence will naturally grow a serene unmistrustful Hope, and a sincere universal Charity.

Now the practice of religious exercise having, as was shown in the foregoing Chapters, a powerful efficacy to turn conviction into persuasion, and strengthen the theological virtues, the proficient in moral or Christian wisdom will be duly assiduous in prayer, meditation, reading, or hearing, and all other divine services, with a view to invigorate his faith thereby. And he will enter upon them with that sole intention: not with the imagination of their doing a real service or giving a real pleasure to God himself, nor of their being an indispensable obligation, nor in dread of incurring his vengeance upon omitting them, nor for gaining the credit of Saintship, nor for the sake of surpassing others, nor because esteeming them good in themselves; but in expectation of fixing the love of God deeper in his own heart, and improving his disposition to labour in all things for the divine Glory.

I am not unapprised that fear, obligation, shame, and the desire of excelling must be employed sometimes and with some persons; for where the true principle is wanting we must supply its place with such succedaneums as can be got, but they are only succedaneums very imperfectly answering the purpose expected from them, nor is devotion ever so completely acceptable, as when performed upon inclination, because apprehended a profitable exercise. It is the want of this intention that makes people righteous overmuch, which can never be unless a mistaken righteousness placed in the very acts of devotion, and not in the habitual tenor of mind to be produced thereby. Which habit may be compared to the pulse in the human body, supplying life and vigour to the whole, giving the spring to all motions as well natural as voluntary, working smoothly and uniformly, and continuing constantly to beat even at times when we do not perceive it. But raptures, transports, and ecstasies may be compared to brandy: it is an excellent cordial when the stomach is cold or the spirits fatigued, and

may be prescribed somewhat copiously to lumpish phlegmatic constitutions; but the continual use of it will infallibly weaken the pulse, and enervate the body, overthrowing that very purpose it was first given to promote.

Thus we see it is not merely the sincerity but the rectitude of intention which gives the full value to our most pious performances, for as St. Paul declared, that if we had all faith so that we could remove mountains yet have not charity, it is nothing; so if we rise early to pray, and sing psalms every third hour of the day, which bespeaks a strong faith of some sort or other, able to remove the mountains of indolence standing in the way of such laborious exercises, yet if there be not a reasonable prospect of increasing our love of God and of our neighbour thereby, and they be not undertaken with that intention, they are not genuine righteousness, and consequently may be done over-much.

Therefore a rightly-aimed intention will prove a guidance both in the manner and measure of our religious duties; I do not expect that every man should presently discern their particular uses by his own judgment, therefore let him follow the rules of his Church, and example of persons whose character he has an opinion of; presuming they were founded upon good reasons though he may not see them; but let him observe their effect upon his own mind as he uses them, and if upon competent trial he finds they add nothing to his hope in the protection and dispensations of Providence, his heartiness of charity towards God and towards man, and that sound faith in the Attributes which is the support of the other two, much more if they make him gloomy, mistrustful, desponding, peevish, censorious, vain of his piety, or remiss in the duties of his station or common intercourses of kindness, he may be assured of having been faulty in the performance, or that they are not for his purpose, but better forborne than continued.

6. But many a man feels a strong disposition to righteousness during the solemnity of a church service, or pious meditations of his closet, which quickly vanishes away when he becomes immersed again in his ordinary occupations: nor can it ever be known whether a virtue be completely formed, or yet but in its embryo state, while kept fostered by the helps that Religion affords, until it can subsist by its own strength amid the bustle of worldly concerns: and when once able to act of itself will gather more vigour and robustness by its spontaneous efforts in good works, than it could have done under the most careful nurture. For this reason it may be presumed that God has subjected us to the necessity of so much attendance to sensible objects; for it had cost nothing to Omnipotence to have provided us food and clothing as well as air to breathe, without any care or trouble of our own to procure them, that we might have had our whole leisure to employ in praises and adorations in the manner the Seraphs are currently supposed to do. But he has so constituted our nature, as to be made perfect by trials, temptations, and avocations: therefore, though we are not to seek temptations purposely, yet have we cause to rejoice at them when sent by Providence, because then there is also a way provided for our escape in better plight than when we fell into them.

The condition of human nature upon earth, and everything belonging thereto, is of divine appointment, and we may trust the Power and Wisdom of God for having so ordered it, as that in every particular it contributes some way or other to his Glory; therefore in all our occupations there is something relative to that end, and it is our business to find out the reference: for though we may answer the end undesignedly, yet it has been

shown above, that doing what God is willing should be done is not doing his Will, unless discerned to be such, and entered upon with that intention.

Hence in every measure lying under our option, there is a right or a wrong course to be taken; the right is that which to the best of our discernment will tend to add something, great or small, nearly or remotely, to the good of the creatures, wherein the Glory of God is manifested. Nor need we be disheartened at the triflingness of the addition, for it was all that the opportunity given us would allow, it was all that was wanted for us to do; while we do our best upon the occasion, we do the whole of our duty in that instance, and both follow and strengthen our main intention as well in trifles, as in matters of greater moment.

7. The man then whom we are attempting to describe, will endeavour to lay out his whole plan of conduct upon one basis, beginning with the principal branches from whence the rest are to grow: he will survey his talents, his improvements, his circumstances, and situation of life, in order to discern how they may be best turned to answer his main intention, not esteeming it necessary to do important services, but to acquit himself of those whereto he is suited, be they greater or less. For nothing is insignificant in the hand of Providence, who perfects mighty works by a multitude of agents, and assigns a necessary share therein to the feeblest, so that the common labourer and the dairy maid performing their part well, are of equal importance in the eye of heaven with the king and the hero.

Having fixed upon his way of life, and principal courses of employment, he will next consider what aids he may avail himself of for carrying him through them; well knowing that everything is not to be done by mere dictate of understanding, but recourse must be had to appetite, habit, and imagination, to execute what reason has planned out. For God and nature has given us various appetites, and the situation in society wherein Providence has placed us throws upon us many aims and desires which we imbibe by example and sympathy before we have any judgment to choose among them; but those springs of action furnished by nature, or fabricated by the courses of Providence, must be presumed to have some good use: on the other hand, continual experience testifies, that they often take an unlucky bias destructive of our principal design.

Therefore the business is not to eradicate appetite, nor those propensities we catch from the world, for then we shall make no progress in anything we take in hand, but to study how they may be employed most effectually to answer some good purpose: that if possible they may never run riot, nor begin their play spontaneously, but constantly take the train that discretion and prudence have put them into. So he will cultivate such desire of self-preservation, of health, of accomplishment, of the accommodations and conveniences of life, of advancement, of success in his profession, of approbation and credit, such moral senses, inclinations, and tastes, as may keep him steady and best help him forward in the way wherein he may be most useful to himself, and others with whom he has any connection; always preferring the more beneficial desire before the less, so as to hazard life, or health, or reputation, or ease, whenever the prosecution of some more valuable good shall so require. If pains and troubles fall upon him, or toilsome tasks require his dispatch, he will strive to get through them with as little reluctance and disquietude of mind as possible; for God sends not evils to afflict his creatures, but for some gracious purpose, and whoever receives them as such, and can preserve the most tranquillity under them, best fulfils his will and promotes his glory. Nor will he despise the embellishments, enjoy-

ments, and pleasures of life, nor those little arts and modes which contribute to increase them: for the glory of God is manifested in the happiness of the creatures, but happiness consists in the aggregate of pleasures; therefore every smallest pleasure being innocent, that is, unproductive of any subsequent mischief, is a mite added to the sum of happiness, and whatever tends to promote it, does not only not contradict, but is an actual furtherance of his main intention.

But besides the direct addition to happiness that innocent pleasures make of themselves, they may enter as parts into some of the principal lines of the design: for they give a motion and briskness to the business of mankind, they promote commerce and encourage industry, they find employment for the time, whet ingenuity, afford room for prudence and discretion in the management for obtaining them, they associate men more closely together, bring them better acquainted with one another's characters, capacities, and ways, assist the growth of charity, make them readier and more capable to join in any important work; they help to preserve the health, to keep the vital juices from stagnating, and the spirits from languor; nor is it a small service they do even towards strengthening our religious sentiments by spreading a serenity and cheerfulness over the mind. For we are more strongly affected with what we feel, than what lies only in prospect before us; most of our discontents, our murmurings, and distrusts arise from some grinding uneasiness or apprehension of danger hanging over us, but when the heart is at ease within itself, it can take a fair survey of the blessings of Providence, behold with a hearty thanksgiving that bounty which is indulgent even to present gratification, and be in good humour with all around, delighting to communicate the joy he feels; which must avail considerably to strengthen our faith, to enliven our hope, and increase our charity.

8. Thus the common occupations of life, the appetites, the ordinary pursuits of the world, the familiar intercourse among society, the propensity to diversion and amusements being capable of yielding salutary fruits, our learner in holiness will contrive how he may sanctify them all by turning them to some profitable account. He will form general rules, divide them into others, and from thence by many subdivisions under one another, furnish himself with motives for every occasion that is likely to happen.

But he need not carry the whole chain perpetually in his head, for if he be careful to hang the several links upon each other without suffering any passion, or prejudice, or secret propensity to slip its own line into his hand, they will carry a general idea of being right, and he will acquire an expertness of judgment or moral sense enabling him to distinguish the right and wrong in every action, upon view, without wanting to refer back to the first foundation. And whatever is done with a consciousness of being right upon the occasion, may be counted done upon the grand principle from whence the opinion of its rectitude was derived, even though appetite and imagination should be the actuating springs: because in this case they do not act originally by their own impulse, but as agents employed in executing the work assigned them.

But there being a difficulty in working downwards from his highest aim, to deduce methodically from thence all the motives which are to guide him in the common transactions of life, he will find it often expedient to proceed the contrary way, endeavouring to hang his ordinary employments upon that aim, by observation of the reference they bear thereto, and consideration of what consequence must follow upon their omission. If he were to give over

his trade or profession, would the world be better supplied for his inactivity? if he could throw aside all desire of profit or credit in his profession, should he proceed in it so briskly and effectually? if he sings psalms every third hour, and perpetually hunts sermons to hear preaching of Christ and him crucified, will it make him more industrious or expert in his business, or in any way more serviceable to his fellow-creatures? Were he careless of his health or his estate, or negligent in his economy, would any benefit redound therefrom to himself or the public, or any glory to God? Should he bestow all his goods to feed the poor, why should not that which is a duty and a praise to him, be so to other people? and if all others did the same, would the poor be more industrious, or the world better supplied with accommodations and necessaries, or the honest trader, who does not deal in commodities wanted by the poor, have better custom? Had men no attention to self-interest in making bargains, would there be less imposition, or more sagacity, or truer estimation of things passing in commerce? Were they tamely to put up with all injuries, overlook all misdemeanors, nor seek redress from the law upon any occasion, would good order, honesty, and justice abound more in the world? Did he forbear laying out a garden, ornamenting his house, or taking a tour of diversion he is inclined to, should he bestow his time, his thoughts, or his money to better purpose, either of his own or of the public, in any other way? Did he surcease the common civilities and little intercourses of kindness practised among acquaintance, would he have better leisure to perform more important services? and if these things have their uses, is there not a use in learning the forms and rules which may render him expert in them? Did he abstain from all diversion and pleasure, should he pass the minutes saved from them with more solace of mind, or greater emolument to himself or others; and could they be pleasures were he totally to damp that taste and appetite which constitute their essence?

9. Having by such inquiries satisfied himself that all these things in their proper seasons, are nearly or remotely subservient in some degree to the main end, he will strive to comprehend them all within his scheme, marshalling each in due order, attentive to important advantages when opportunity serves, but on failure of such, esteeming every little profit that may be made upon the occasion, be it no more than that of a transient amusement, worthy his notice. And as in every engagement, how trifling soever, there is an aim to be pursued, he will apply such judgment and observance to attain it as the object deserves; but having well settled the reference his under aims bear to the principal, he will follow them severally for the time, taking that for the line of rectitude which will conduct most effectually to his present purpose.

By this means his outward deportment will appear for the most part nothing different from the carnal and worldly-minded; because he will follow the same pursuits and occupations, proceed under the same views, be actuated by the same appetites and desires, partake in the same engagements and amusements. For Providence has so moulded the desires and inclinations of men, that those who act primarily upon their impulse advance the Glory of God by contributing to the good, the accommodation, and the enjoyment of their fellow-creatures: yet they do not his Will, because not discerning it to be such, nor making that the motive for taking up the other motives which successively influence them. Whereas he who derives his inferior aims from that principle, and suffers them to prevail with him be-

cause bearing a reference thereto, though he has nothing of God nor religious subjects in his thoughts during the prosecution of them, may be counted doing the Will of God; because if at any time they appeared contradictory thereto, he could and would withstand them; and to be paying that obedience which is better than sacrifice, and which sacrifice is no otherwise good, than to bring the mind into. Hence it becomes manifest, that Religion is no such melancholy, laborious, austere, romantic, and forbidding thing, as too commonly imagined, and that it ever appears so, is owing to the rags of disguise sown upon it by craft, by error, superstition, enthusiasm, and inconsiderate zeal. For the common business of life, the cares of our health, of our possessions, of our reputation, our prudence in dealings, our contentions, and animadversions, may be brought to bear a part in it; our appetites, tastes, aversions, and acquired habits, may be employed in its service; our familiar intercourses, our customary modes and forms of behaviour, our recreations, amusements, and pleasures, may be made subservient to it; and we may many times be serving God by doing the same things that are done by those who never have him in their thoughts. It forbids us no pleasures, but such as we should rue for in the consequences; it enjoins us no labours, but such as a prudent man would gladly undertake for the profits accruing from them; it drives into no troubles, that are not the purchase of greater enjoyments; it doubles the relish of innocent pleasures, by a thankful and joyful reflection upon that bounty from whence they flow; it lightens the infirmities of nature and pressures of fortune, by teaching us to consider them as necessary burdens for some important service whereof we shall share in the advantage, and to strive for our present tranquillity of mind in supporting them manfully, it finds constant engagement for our attention, because in every situation there is something to be done which we may esteem a profit gained.

For God and reason bid us be happy, and religion is but the science of attaining happiness; while pursuing our real advantages, and contriving wisely to increase our stock of pleasures, we do his will: it is only when for want of thought and contrivance, or of resolution, we follow present pleasure in preference to greater which will be lost thereby, that we disobey and dishonour him: so that we may say no man ever yet offended his Maker, merely by pleasing himself, but by overlooking those evil consequences which such indulgence will draw behind. Whoever, therefore, has arrived at such knowledge of the uses and tendencies of religion, as will make him discern it to be, what it really is, the true art of pleasure, need no longer think of duty or obligation: for when the idea of duty is gone by being turned into inclination and prospect of advantage in those particulars which were the objects of it, no damage can ensue from the loss.

Perhaps it will be urged, that such discernment is not presently to be gained: I believe it is not, nor is any science or skill I ever heard of to be acquired without time and application, and during the progress there will be doubts, difficulties, and perplexities, which yet will gradually lessen. But men are so unreasonable they expect to buy understanding and sentiments as they do wares, ready made, at a shop: if they give orders to their upholder to furnish a house, as soon as he has sent in what is proper, they find themselves instantly in possession of every thing useful and convenient for a family: so they expect that by running over a book of morality by way of amusement, cursorily, forgetting each page as they go on to the next, it should, like the upholder, without further care of their own, immediately

throw in, as it were by inspiration, all the good qualities recommended therein. But all the exhortations and reasonings in the world will avail nothing without a spirit of industry to weigh, to digest, and practise them.

For it is impossible to compile a system of rules and instructions that shall suit all capacities and answer all occasions, but the learner must add something from his own fund to accommodate them to his particular use. Or could he be supplied with a perfect Vade mecum to carry in his pocket, which should contain directions for every minute case of conduct that could happen, he would go like a horse guided by whip and bridle, nor have any use at all for his own observation and understanding.

But what was our judgment given us for, unless to exercise it? and what better have we to do, than employ it for our own benefit? Whoever has such a listlessness as never to stir spontaneously, can only be roused by terrror, duty, and obligation, and must be kept drudging under those severe task-masters, until experience and practise shall bring him to a discernment of benefit, and a liking to the work. But where there is a willingness, I conceive that as all the precepts of the Law and the Gospel are said to hang upon Charity, so by continually observing the tendencies of actions and dependencies of aims upon one another, he may hang both his greater schemes, and his occasional motives of behaviour, upon that one purpose of performing the full part assigned him, in advancing the Glory of God, and good of the creation.

10. Nevertheless, there is great caution to be used, that we do not mistake the real dependency of our under aims, nor fancy them hanging upon their proper centre, only because they happen to lie in the line pointing directly towards it; for gross mistakes of this kind are committed daily. I have declared all along, and cannot too often repeat, that nothing is more deceitful than the heart of man, nor harder for him to discover upon many occasions, than his own true motives of conduct. We are apt to take any reasons that may be alleged in justification of our actions for the reasons inducing us to perform them, and if some unthought-of good should result therefrom, are sure to claim the merit to ourselves. The merchant boasts that he supplies the public with useful commodities, finds employment for industrious poor, nurses up seamen, and increases the customs; but it may be those benefits were purely accidental, and the sole motive carrying him through all his toils was that of amassing riches. The sailor glories in having spread the fame of his country, and made her a terror to remotest nations of the globe; but perhaps the objects in his view during the service were none other than pay and prize-money. The politician is necessary to preserve order and good government in the nation; yet possibly the nation might never be half so much in his thoughts as his own power and aggrandizement. Our indecent and outrageous champions for liberty may have given occasion to some little further security being added to it; yet I fear the love of constitutional liberty is so little their passion, that they do not so much as know what it is. Therefore it is not enough that our actions yield a real profit without having good ground of assurance that they were really entered upon with that view, or some derivative view or impulse licensed and encouraged, because being judged conducive thereto.

But when apprized how strong delusion the mind is prone to fall into upon this article, we cannot be too frequent nor too careful in examining our motives closely, tracing them severally to their source, and observing what variety of them might be influencing upon each particular occasion. For I have so good an opinion of mankind as to believe the rule of rectitude does

always prevail with them, where there is not some secret bias pre-occupying, or drawing a contrary way.

Therefore if we can certainly know what must have been our motive or motives; if it were not the right one, and are conscious of having gone contrary to them all, this seems the firmest ground we can have to build the assurance above mentioned upon. If the merchant has slipped an opportunity of gain because it might have proved detrimental to the public; if the clamorous patriot has ever been prompted by the love of liberty to speak well of persons he does not like, to resist an impulse of vanity, envy, or petulance; in those instances they may claim the merit of having acted upon a motive of rectitude; and if they have frequently done so, may be satisfied of having a right principle of conduct. For as the weight of goods cannot be better ascertained than by weighing other things of certain standard against them, so the strength of our principles is best evidenced by their success in overpowering their antagonists. And that our principle may be able to cope with all antagonists, it will behove us sedulously to employ every opportunity for nourishing and strengthening it, first by often reviewing the grounds of conviction recommending it to our judgment as the jewel above all price, the sure fountain of happiness; then by pursuing the methods efficacious for turning that conviction into persuasion, among which in the foremost rank stand our religious exercises of all kinds, as well of the Church as the closet, of adoration as meditation, which were given for that purpose, and avail to none other, nor need they to make them inestimably valuable.

Therefore ought we to be duly assiduous in the practice of them, and that we may be so, neither excessive nor deficient in the measure, neither impetuous nor careless in the manner, it will be necessary to see that we enter upon them with a right intention, which is that of answering the purpose above mentioned: I say to enter upon them, for during the performance it may be sometimes expedient, as has been shown before in the twenty-first Chapter, to take up a temporary persuasion not exactly tallying with the convictions of our judgment. But if we go to our devotions with an expectation of meriting by them, of doing an actual service or pleasure to God, of changing his disposition towards us, of acquiring a pre-eminence in sanctity above our fellows, or with an idea of their being arbitrary commands imposed only to try our obedience, or under terror of punishment upon the neglect of them, they can scarce be called doing the Will of God, because not proceeding from that aim which ought to lie at the bottom of all our proceedings, and rise uppermost to our thoughts in these, I mean the divine Glory manifested in the happiness of the creatures.

I know those other topics are frequently inculcated, and with reason, because necessary where a better cannot be explained or made to touch the heart; for so the school-boy must be kept to his lesson by the rod and by injunctions or the lure of applause, because he has not a just sense of the value of learning; but I conceive it is from the urging them too strongly that the extravagances of the Methodists and others inclining that way have arisen. They may be the proper ways conducting into holiness, but I apprehend we are not fully arrived at it, nor is our Religion pure and rational until we can proceed in the exercises of it with the sole expectation of rivetting and habitualizing the three virtues thereby in our hearts, and obtaining those rewards which are made the natural consequences of them by the provisions of Heaven, ordained for the progress of the human soul through her several stages of existence.

And if this be our proper ultimate point of view, it must be highly important to fix our eye upon it, when going upon those exercises which are designed to give it an influence upon all our other courses of behaviour. But when coming forth from divine services, though we cannot expect to retain the spiritual ideas accompanying them, amid the bustle of the world, yet we may take care to preserve the effect of them upon our demeanour in that bustle, by considering our general employments of life or particular occupations of the day that we shall or are likely to be engaged in, how they may be best pursued to our own future or present advantage, or that of others, regard being had to abilities, habits, opportunities, and other circumstances, and to practicability upon each several occasion, and deriving our several aims of pursuit under one another from that grand purpose, the increase of happiness among the creatures; so that whether we work or negociate, or contend, or prosecute, or discourse, or eat, or play, however we may be totally attentive for the time to the object before us, that object may have been recommended to our attention by having traced its reference to some good, either of body or mind, the greatest that was feasible upon the occasion, wherein God is glorified.

A man that has used himself to run over his schemes of conduct for all occurrences, while the spirit of piety raised by his devotions remains fresh upon him, will be able to give a reason for all that he does, not always a pious reason but always one that grew from his piety. If he be asked why he works at his trade, why he takes care of his estate, why he goes to law, or paid a visit, or went to the play, or played at cards yester-evening, to answer, For the glory of God, would be untrue; or, if true, would be a profanation of his name, and a spice of that righteousness which is over-much: but he may say, In prosecution of some rule or maxim of behaviour which in his most serious moods he had examined by that standard, and judged more conducive thereto than any others he could have taken upon the particular occasion wherein he follows them.

11. By such practice begun upon an intimate conviction of obedience being our truest policy, I apprehend it may become the fundamental rule of action, the governing principle, giving force to all other rules occasionally guiding us, and thereby sanctifying whatever is done under their direction: and though it be not a passion because founded on the soundest reason, yet may have the strength and efficacy of a predominant passion. For it has been laid down by persons most observant of the characters of mankind, that every man has his ruling passion, that attracts and swallows up all the rest: I presume we are not to understand them so strictly, as that other appetites will not solicit at intervals when that has no work to carry on: for the covetous man will go to a feast or a play if you treat him, and it interrupts no gainful scheme going forward, though he expects to get nothing but mere entertainment by his compliance: but though his ruling passion lies all the while inactive and unperceived even by himself, it is not asleep, for how deeply soever he be engaged in other amusements, the moment any thing offers to affect his pocket, it will gain his attention in preference to all objects beside; so that we may say his appetites only act by license granted during pleasure from that. In like manner, wherever there is a thorough principle of obedience, it will continually keep awake, though not continually finding matter of employment, and though utterly out of sight during engagements in business or diversion, while taken up in trivial, necessary, and base offices, incompatible with the sublimity of its ideas, nevertheless, when any thing contradictory to it offers, it will instantly take alarm, or if

something practicable for promoting its principal purposes presents, it will immediately fly to the pursuit.

Nor will it, like the ruling passion, barely give license to other desires and appetites, thereby keeping them within the bounds of moderation and innocence, but will bring them subservient to its own aim: for knowing what they are severally capable of, and what damage must ensue if they could be totally eradicated, it will find means to use their ministry in carrying on the great design; thus having continual employment to be executed either by itself, or by those its inferior ministers. Neither yet will it want force to attract and swallow up that, which swallows all the rest: for well perceiving the mighty strength of a ruling passion, and how much greater works may be achieved by its aid than by the mere dictate of reason, it will turn that powerful agent into such courses, where it may be most useful, and restrain it effectually from others that might work havoc and devastation.

And whatever is the main spring of our movements will perpetually catch the thoughts at times, when they are not necessarily engrossed by other objects. The covetous man loves to count over his bags, he will indeed be telling his money, when he should be getting more, but at leisure hours, when he has nothing else to do, he can find entertainment in contemplating his riches, laying schemes for increasing them, ruminating upon golden projects, and even feeding his fancy upon wishes of lucky opportunities that are not likely to happen; and in the midst of his most eager pursuits many a pleasing reflection of the profit to accrue from them will occur spontaneously whenever there is room for it, without interruption to the business in hand. So the miser in righteousness will find his thoughts run of their own accord, when not called off to other necessary service: he will be continually ruminating upon the ways of Providence, the connection of interests, the bounties of Heaven, digesting and perfecting his schemes of conduct, tracing the reference of his common transactions to their main end, and searching into the uses of everything that passes around him: and though when necessitated to immerse himself in wordly cares and trivial engagements, he will apply the full attention which the present purpose requires, yet a thought of his obedience, his grand concern, and expectations as citizen of the universe, will slip in uncalled whenever there is room for it, and it is proper, together with a pleasing reflection that in doing his worldly business he carries on his spiritual, and every pleasure that is innocent is profitable: for God has so ordered his courses of Nature and Fortune, that this life in all particulars is preparatory to the next, and whatever he calls us to thereby, whether labour or play, though we do not discern it, will work to our advantage.

But this vital principle which ought to be sober, rational, determinate, steady, and uniform, degenerates in some persons too frequently conversant among methodists and enthusiasts into a passion; and then takes all the irregularities of that uncertain spring of action: it becomes convulsive and agueish, sometimes boiling in transports and ecstacies, at others stagnating in terrors and despondences, unable to lay out a regular, practicable plan of conduct, or make the proper junction between religious exercises and the common occupations which providence has rendered necessary to the condition wherein we are placed, striving to mingle them together as ingredients in the same mess, rather than unite them as distinct members of the same body; whence their piety intrudes unseasonably to the interruption of business, and continually disturbs the operation of the very measures itself had recommended as expedient. Care therefore must

be taken for guarding against this corruption, for if the light that is within us be darkness, how great is that darkness! But when the governing principle has been established upon the solid grounds of rational conviction, when the methods have been pursued for turning it into an habitual persuasion, and for distributing its influence among the several engagements of life, in the manner before mentioned, recalling it frequently to mind at convenient times, it will be a principle of reason, sobriety, and discretion, not a predominant passion.

12. And I imagine the business of life would go on never the worse, if men were to take this governing principle for the prime director of all their motions: for it would not lead them into idleness, nor sullenness, nor neglect of their persons, nor insensibility to pleasure or reputation, nor perhaps would it much alter the measures they already pursue. We must have food and clothing or we cannot live to do any important services, we must take due care of our healths and our spirits, or we shall perform them but feebly and ineffectually; we must gather such innocent enjoyments as Providence has hung in our reach, or we shall become melancholy, unthankful, and murmuring; we must conform to the customs of mankind and join in familiar intercourses among them, or we shall be utter strangers in the midst of society, without means of learning by observation from others, or communicating improvement to them, or doing them any good offices.

The day labourer, the mechanic, the merchant, the soldier, the mere squire devoid of learning, military skill, or accomplishment, the delicate petit maitre versed in no science but that of dress, and cards, and tea-table prattle, the poet, the songster, and the fiddler, are of some use in their several stations, contributing more or less to the necessaries, the conveniences, the security, or the amusements of life.

The appetite of hunger, the love of health, the desire of improving our fortune, the regard to reputation and the taste for pleasures respectively urge to the care of our persons, to industry in our professions, to merit the esteem of our companions, and give a relish to our diversions: therefore have their uses, as being necessary to stimulate and carry us through the performance of things useful. It is only the discernment of those uses and reference thereto in entering upon our courses of behaviour, that is wanting to sanctify and render them steps taken in prosecution of our main intent: for where such reference has constantly been practised, nothing will be done originally upon impulse, nor for we know not why, though appetite may be and commonly must be aiding to carry on the work with the strength of its impulse, but appetite always receiving commission to act from the governing principle, whatever measures it impels to, which were before accidentally productive of some good, will now become an obedience to the will of God. And one would think it should prove no small encouragement with men to cultivate a holiness of temper, to see that thereby they may turn most of their habitual attachments and desires into virtues, most of their common occupations, many of their amusements, their trifles, and their follies into good deeds, only by finding out and contemplating the unobserved good uses whereto they were subservient: and thus learn to live unto God without totally departing from the ways of the world.

It scarce needs to be repeated, that when holiness has set appetite his task, and limited the extent of his commission, it must leave the execution entirely to the servant for fear of demeaning and fouling itself among those gross ideas to which the eye must then be held attentive. But if habit and desire be thus inured to discipline, and to take direction from an impartial

reference to the grand aim of attaining spiritual happiness by a steady prosecution of temporal among our fellow-creatures wherein God is glorified, it will never run out into spontaneous sallies, nor courses palpably mischievous, nor anything wherein that reference cannot be traced: it will lie so quiet when reason and duty command silence, that the left cheek may be turned to him that has smote the right, and he that has taken the coat permitted to take the cloak also, and kind offices be performed to enemies and persecutors; and the whole conduct will be rational, pious, uniform, profitable, and satisfactory.

13. Nor would this principle do hurt to men of the richest talents and highest stations whose ruling passion is name, power, and greatness, which it would not eradicate nor stifle, but employ as an able minister in its own services. For such persons above all others, may be expected never to act upon mere impulse, but to have a Why for all their proceedings: nor is it enough that their measures are dexterously contrived to answer the aim they drive at, unless they know likewise why they took up that aim, and if because conducive to some higher aim, have examined that too, and so pursued their views from point to point to the furthest boundary of human reason.

For to use uncommon judgment and abilities in the attainment of an end, but pursue the end only because their mother taught them, because delighting their fancy, because the constant subject of panegyric, because raising the admiration of the multitude, because everybody wishes to attain it, seems a preposterous way of proceeding: it is subjecting the man in servitude to the beast. For wiser heads than mine have of old compared reason and appetite to the rider and his horse: but it would be ridiculous to see a man on first setting out give his horse the choice whether they shall travel north or west, and then exercise the most consummate skill and management for arriving at the meadows two hundred miles off, which he knows his horse is fond of.

For their choice of the ultimate object to be pursued in the journey of life I shall not send them back to the Catechism nor the pulpit, nor pretend to lead them on the process whereby they may find it: for their own judgment, provided they will use it, will direct them better than any instructions by persons of less extensive views and less ample capacities, yet it may save some trouble to suggest a few topics whereon to exercise their judgment. They may please then to consider, whether happiness be not the proper ultimate object for reason to pursue, whether there be anything else to be found beyond, which renders it desirable, and whether all other things do not become desirable for their tendency to that. Whether happiness stands confined to the gratification of a few years, or that distant good is likewise to be taken into the computation: whence it appears a mere impulse of appetite that would attach them to the splendour of their present situation, were it certainly to be of half a century continuance, but as in the schemes they lay for the prosperity of the nation, they contrive for future ages to the remotest posterity, so prudence and considerate judgment will incline them to consult their own happiness in the most distant futurity. Whether their care to have their names shine in history and be remembered with honour by succeeding generations, be really a concern for the future, or only the gratification of a present appetite; or there be any probable assurance, that they shall know a hundred years hence, or shall feel any real pleasure therein if they do know what is then said of them, in which

case they will reap no other benefit from their fame than what arises from the contemplation of it while they live.

They may examine what is properly themselves, what only an instrument, habitation, or adjunct separable from them, to which of the two their family, their fortune, their knowledge, their accomplishments were owing, and whether they can depend upon being born into another state of being under the same advantageous circumstances as they came into this.

It may then be expedient to cast a thought upon the origin of things, whether Necessity and Chance be substances, active powers, or efficient causes of anything, or only manners of acting in other substances; whether a perceptive Being can be formed by the composition of unperceptive principles; whether the order of nature and variety of diversely qualified substances we behold, must not be the production of a free and intelligent agent, and what the character of that agent may be conceived to be. Whether there be not rational grounds to conclude the whole universe governed by one general scheme of polity, having a mutual dependence of all its parts upon one another, with a strict impartiality of favour among the perceptive members, preserving an exact equality in the portion of each, computed throughout the whole extent of their existence; from whence follows an intimate connection of interests, every individual having a personal concern in whatever good or evil befalls every other: therefore the many were not made for the few, but the few for the many, and what extraordinary abilities are given to some, were not given in particular fondness to them, but for the sake of the public, or for all those who may be benefitted by them.

By competent reflection upon these topics, it may possibly appear to their satisfaction that the happiness of all for whom they can procure it, is the ultimate point which reason and judgment will recommend to their pursuit, as standing next in order to their own happiness: and it will readily occur that the happiness of the people does not consist solely in the riches and prosperity of the nation, but likewise in good internal polity, decency of manners, propriety of sentiments, variety of engagements, innocence of desires, peace and tranquillity of mind, all which they will be attentive severally to promote by such ways and methods as may offer. They may then contemplate the weakness of human nature in which reason is too feeble to work its purposes without aid of some passion to assist in the execution: therefore it is expedient to cultivate in their breast a nobleness of sentiment, a love of fame, a desire of eminence, power, and influence among their compatriots, making this the ruling passion to absorb and overwhelm all other desires incident to the human heart, as well knowing that without such powerful incitement they could never have spirit enough to go through all the troubles, the fatigues, the self-denials, the contrivances necessary for the public service.

So they will not take this impulse for the prime director of their conduct, but employ it as a vigorous agent for the better furtherance of those designs they had determined upon before in their calm and sober judgment, as a man uses his horse to carry him further upon his journey than he could possibly have gone with his own legs. But they will not suffer the horse to take the bit between his teeth and run away with them, nor give into measures detrimental to the public for sake of gratifying the beast: for the rider will never drop the reins though sometimes loosening them to give scope to a full career, much less will he use his sagacity to justify the

wanton sallies of the horse, or find out by an after-thought, that they have advanced him forward on his journey, but will keep a constant eye beforehand upon the courses he is going to take.

And if they have a principle of reason strong enough to rule the ruling passion, it will find employment in many cases where the servant cannot assist, or even would stand inclined to oppose: they will be careful to encourage no vices, extravagances, nor fashionable follies, to lead insensibly into wholesome sentiments by their discourses and example, to watch all occasions of doing a real good, though by ways not contributing to increase their credit or interest, to comply with forms, ceremonies, and customs useful for the people, though perhaps not esteemed needful for themselves, to forego opportunities of enlarging their power, to resign it peaceably and contentedly, to bear undeserved treatment, abuses, and slander, whenever the public good shall so require; a harder task than that of turning the right cheek to him that has smote the left, or giving up the cloak also to him that has taken away the coat.

Thus the divine Glory pursued by the good of the creatures is capable of furnishing the plan of conduct for all stations of life, and directing the choice in all circumstances that can happen; and measures of every kind would be better laid than upon any other foundation. For nothing can fall within the compass of our activity; but there is one course to be taken productive of better advantage than another, be it no more than for a present, momentary pleasure: for this is an accession to happiness when no greater can be made. Not that the grand principle can actuate all our particular motions, for this is both impracticable and improper; but it may give sanction to the rules directing them, generate the aims inviting to them, and license the appetites exciting them. And he that should proceed in all his actions upon aims derived directly, or by the medium of other aims, from that origin, and by the impulse of appetites commissioned thereby, might be truly said to be pursuing his main intention in them all; and whether he eats or drinks, or whatsoever he does, to be doing all for the Glory of God, even at times when he has nothing of that object in his thoughts.

There is no occasion to affect a singularity of behaviour nor seek for uncommon ways of employing our time, in order to live a life of holiness: there needs only to consider the station wherein we are placed as the call of God, to acquit ourselves well in all the parts of it, momentous or trivial, in such manner as that we could not have done better upon the occasion; all circumstances regarded: and to have our desires under such discipline as they may never stir of their own mere motion, but run always in the courses marked out beforehand by considerate judgment, upon the plan of fulfilling our little part in promoting the gracious designs of Providence: for this is that obedience which is better than sacrifice, and is the genuine product of an unmistaken sanctity.

14. But it will be counted a romantic expectation to think that appetite can ever be made a so completely managed horse, as to move in all its paces at the word of command, or that we can have skill enough to trace a reference in our common transactions to the general interest of the creation. This I have acknowledged before, and shall not now recant; therefore I would have no man depend upon achieving it; yet he may propose it for his constant aim, and endeavour upon all occasions to come as near to it as possible, but without being terrified when he misses his mark, or if at any time the air be so darkened that he cannot discern it.

For God and nature first put us under conduct of appetite, from whence discretion and wisdom are afterwards to grow: but we must not expect to see the perfect tree shoot instantaneously from the seed. Therefore appetite is our proper guide whenever we have no better to follow; but experience, instruction, and converse among mankind, quickly discover to us the errors of appetite, and create other desires of health, security, improvement, profit, advancement, or reputation, which supply us with fuller engagement than the natural, because finding a pleasure in prospects before us, and giving a present interest in gratifications yet to come.

But those pursuits proving often delusive, obstructing one another and leading into mischievous consequences, there needs a higher rule to guide them: and this can be had only from contemplation of universal Nature, and the power by which it was established. Thus during the reign of appetite which gave beginning to our infant actions, we were little different from the brutes; discretion, common prudence, and knowledge in the ways of the world made men of us, and Religion, if it were perfect and practicable, would make us Angels, or as near to Angels as our present condition is capable of being raised. It would still retain enjoyment or happiness for our ultimate end, rating that at a distance as high as if it were near at hand, and allowing that at hand the full value it deserves: it would forbid us no present pleasures that could be had at free cost, and would teach us to feel a present satisfaction in prospects of the most remote. Therefore would restrain either the natural or acquired appetites in nothing that can add to the sum of our enjoyments; it would only withhold them from running into mischiefs they do not foresee, and turn them into courses that would yield profit as well as gratification; making our whole lives a continued scene of satisfaction either in the present fruition of innocent pleasures, or the joyful reflection of being at work in the acquisition of future.

For whoever has a hearty desire of doing always what he discerns to be right, will seldom fail of having that desire gratified: and a state of continual gratification in a predominant desire everybody will allow to be a state of enjoyment. But the uneasinesses we feel, spring either from the want of a quick discernment and strong persuasion that the measures we take will conduce to our principal end, or from the desire being too weak to overpower any pain or trouble that lies in the way.

Now if we think this discernment and strength of desire too hard a task for us ever to attain completely, as indeed I think so too, yet when making due reflection upon the value of them if they could be attained, we shall wish to approach as near to them as possible: and without vexing ourselves at what we cannot do, shall watch for every opportunity of making a little advance towards them, as being an advantage gained, with as much attention as a miser does to the profit of every shilling he can get in a bargain. For those are seldom the most thriving people, who drive at none but vast projects, and will needs grow rich at once: nor is he likely to make the best proficiency in holiness, who expects to become a saint by one eager resolution, to practise uncommon virtues, and never do a wrong thing again. But tresures in Heaven as well as upon earth are raised by continually accumulating to the stock in hand, and more is to be done by vigilance and industry, than by strength and impetuosity.

15. By due performance of our religious services with a view to that effect for which alone they are profitable, the improving our dispositions and sentiments of mind, every exercise will add something to their vigour,

and help to render them more habitual: so that after paying our devotions rightly at any time, we may depend upon having made a profit, which will manifest itself in our subsequent conduct: the next thought will be how to exemplify our sentiments by our practice.

And here we shall certainly find an insurmountable difficulty in laying out all parts of our conduct upon this plan, and discovering a reference in every employment we must unavoidably engage in to our principal intention: but this need not trouble us, for this world is a school wherein we must not expect to be masters in the science we were sent hither to learn. Yet we may continually make some proficiency therein, observing references where we had not discerned them before, finding uses in things we had esteemed unavailing, deducing new rules from our more general, suited to the variety of circumstances that may befall, correcting them from time to time and learning better how to turn particular opportunities to the best account, either for promoting some solid good or innocent pleasure, or for escaping the mischiefs and inconveniences that might ensue from the neglect of them.

For experience and diligence will do great matters by imperceptible workings: we know the frugal proverb, a pin a day is a groat a year, and if we make ever so little advance every day in our progress, it is scarce to be credited what lengths we may arrive at by the year's end, so as to feel the truth of that promise, To him that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance: and all this without toil or trrror, but only by a hearty willingness to the work, and a strong persuasion that every stroke struck in it will be a real profit gained.

And we may profit not only by the habit of marking out the track we are to go, but likewise by casting a retrospect at convenient seasons upon those we have gone, examining how things have succeeded, wherein we might have managed better, every now and then tracing our references to their fountain-head, and rejoicing in any good trains we have fallen into accidentally, because this will make them our operating motive another time, when the like opportunity returns again. Our ultimate point cannot be held always in view, for there is a time for heavenly thoughts and a time for worldly cares, a time to work and a time to play, a time to be serious, and a time to be merry: but it will cast an abstract idea of rectitude upon whatever moral senses, appetites, prudential rules, common aims, regards to necessity or propriety were regularly deduced from it, or allowed upon their apparent reference traced to it: so that after having gotten a competent stock of them, we shall proceed for the most part with a consciousness of doing right, which will prove a present reward for our diligence, and an encouragement to persevere in it: and in our serious moods may serve as a topic of joyful thanksgiving for the progress we have been enabled to go, and the little share wherein we have been made instrumental together with other of our fellow-creatures, towards carrying on any work of God, whether in the advancement of Religion, some public benefit, education of our children, services of our friends, or by some small addition to the conveniences or cheerfulness of life. Which topic may be frequently resumed with good emolument, as helping considerably to strengthen the three fundamental virtues in our hearts: provided care be taken to keep clear of the pharasaical comparison with other persons supposed less profitable servants. For it is the property of sound piety to joy in good works for the profit, not for the credit of them, and take a sensible relish in the smallest, when

satisfied they were the best that could have been done under the circumstances attending them.

When pains and afflictions, toils and troubles fall upon us, we shall often suffer by them and often be thrown off the hinges, for we were born in weakness, and bred up in fears and delicacy, but if we cannot master the strong, we shall continually make fresh conquests upon the smaller, and continually gather some accession of strength to contend with the mightiest; but every victory, and every brave struggle, even though unsuccessful, will be esteemed an advantage and a pleasure. Appetite and habit will still prompt to action upon their own impulse, without staying to take direction from the rules of judgment, sometimes will carry us forcibly in opposition thereto, or sometimes warp us insensibly out of the line, and we shall often lose sight of our reference, so as to discern no rule drawn from thence applicable to the present occasion. But when the rider does not see the way himself, he cannot do better than let the horse find his own track, and if the beast be serviceable, will be content to take the good qualities with the bad, nor wish to part with him, or have him lose all his mettle because of some unlucky tricks; for how often soever he be run away with, he will never quit hold of the reins, but try to gather them up when he can, and bring him off his tricks by degrees.

If the governing principle be well rooted it will never lie asleep though sometimes inactive, and sometimes overpowered; and if it cannot always direct or give the spring to action, yet like the demon of Socrates, it will always stand ready to check when things are going amiss, so that conscience shall ever be vigilant to take alarm: but the pricks of conscience will not so much afflict and torment us, as stimulate our resolution and excite our diligence, and their repeated pungency will produce effects that could not have been worked by strength.

The same principle likewise may keep us attentive to the ways of Providence in the administration of the moral world, the springs of action working among mankind, the courses of events, the uses and tendencies of things moving around us, from whence to gather wholesome directions for the better management of our own conduct; to find matter of joy and thankfulness in blessings falling out of our reach and in works performed by others wherein we had no hand.

For the general connection of interests having gained our full persuasion, will give us a concern in all the good and evil we behold elsewhere, as also in whatever conduces to increase the one, or diminish the other: therefore we shall not wish to engross sanctity and wisdom to ourselves, those two copious sources of general good, nor be forward to depreciate our fellow-labourers, being sensible that the larger their abilities and better their dispositions are, the quicker that great work, redounding to the common benefit of all, the perfecting of the human species, will go on. This must make us candid to others, ready to interpret, to judge, and to augurate for the best with that partiality which naturally inclines us to believe what we wish, not prone to revenge, nor envy, nor personal resentment; never doing hurt nor displeasure, but reluctlantly, upon the necessity of securing some greater good that must otherwise be lost, and pleased with any real benefit, though worked undesignedly by persons acting under the impulse of appetite or upon private views.

16. This pleasure together with the observation of what great benefits to mankind are so worked by those undiscerning springs of action, might

instruct us how to shape our dealings with the world; for those who go about to reform mankind are commonly too romantic in their schemes, and the methods of pursuing them. The Philospher would have all men constantly follow their reason, and then they would want nothing else to make them completely happy; whether this be true or no I cannot certainly tell, but undoubtedly if they would follow their reason, things would go on infinitely better than they do: but the great difficulty lies in bringing them to walk steadily under that guidance, and to this purpose I conceive Religion and religious services, rightly applied, together with the rules of conduct deriving a sanction from their reference thereto, are supremely conducive. The pious man wants to make everybody a Saint, until finding the generality unwilling to be tutored by him, he gives them over for wicked creatures, reprobates upon whom nothing is to be done: so he wraps himself up in his own integrity, conversing solely with his God, as being incapable of doing service to his fellow-creatures. If he could make them real and rational Saints, I have no objection, and should be overjoyed to lend him a helping hand; but what if he cannot? is there nothing else to be done for them in the labour of love? He is commanded to do good to enemies and persecutors, whom we may presume wicked men, scarce capable of being improved by him in sanctity: therefore, there must be some other benefit to be done them, for God would not command a duty that is impossible.

Religion and the governing principle above mentioned lead us to do all the good we can, not that we cannot do, because we think it better: but how know we what is best? and ought we not to esteem that best whereto we are called by Nature and Providence having put it into our power? The necessaries and conveniences, the embellishments and enjoyments of life are good and valuable in themselves, nor ever become unholy unless when the abuse of them draws on greater mischiefs, which over-balance their benefit: therefore whatever contributes to the supply of them deserves our attention and encouragement, which to apply upon all seasonable opportunities is a part of the work whereto we are called.

But those things must be procured by the labour of multitudes acting in various ways, few of which they could ever be brought into by the principles of Religion. For how will you raise a sense of the general interest in the ignorant ploughman, lively enough to carry him through the fatigues of his daily work? Yet without his industry you cannot have your daily bread. How will you inspire the unfeeling seaman with a public spirit, sufficient to make him endure all hardships, to brave the dangers of every element? Yet without his aid you cannot live securely at home, or enjoy the tranquillity needful for your meditations to the improvement of your own or your neighbour's sanctity.

Religion with the generality of mankind, where there is some sense of it, operates but as a bridle, not as a spur, exciting no desire of any kind, but at most restraining those arising from other sources; it is submitted to as a burden necessary for avoiding the stripes threatened to disobedience: so they serve God as the Indians do the devil, that he may not hurt them, and their solicitude is to escape hell rather than to gain Heaven, nor would they ever think of the latter if there were a third place whither they might go to be secure from the former. The springs actuating their movements and aims inviting their pursuit are sustenance, or fortune, or power, or greatness, or reputation, or amusement, or some favourite scheme they have been made fond of by natural appetite, by education, custom, or accident,

touching their fancy. Therefore by observation upon the characters and abilities of men, means may often be found of turning their desires to some advantage of their own, or of one another: our business then is to join with what little aid we can bring to any thing going forward for improvement of good manners, good polity, peace, tranquillity of mind, convenience or enjoyment of life; for all we do of this kind comes properly within our day's work, so that if entered upon in that light, we shall be serving God, whatever idols our fellow-labourers in the same work are serving. Nor yet is it impossible they may be serving him unknowingly, and themselves too, in the most essential point: for neither Religion nor Philosophy could go the lengths they have done, without the aids and materials furnished them by the labourer, the mechanic, the manufacturer, the merchant, the naturalist, the mathematician, the astronomer, and the statesman.

17. We speculative people are apt to persuade ourselves, it would be a happy world if all men were good, and I must own myself still in that persuasion, provided you allow us our own definition of good men: that is, such in whom reason is so absolute, and the spirit of rectitude so strong, as to overpower all indolence, appetite, terror, and pain, with the same ease as a violent fit of revenge, or love, or jealousy, or ambition, or covetousness can do, which will enable men to bear any toils or hurts in the prosecution of their purpose, without feeling them. But if we must be fetched down from our visionary ideas, and confined to such good men as can be found upon the earth, I much question whether matters would be mended if all others could be brought to resemble them.

Prudence, that first cardinal virtue, foundation of all the rest, discovers approaching evils too clearly, and destroys that insensibility of danger necessary for many important services: good management, contentedness, and aversion to waste, keep off those necessities which drive the world to industry. The shoe-maker earns enough in four days to maintain him the whole week, so he never will do a stitch of work before Wednesday morning. The common sailor will not return on board while he has a farthing of the wages received remaining in his pocket: it is riot and debauchery reduce him to that indigence which makes him a useful member of the community.

I do not produce these as examples of good men, but I fear the best of human goodness has so much of human infirmity mingled among it, as to render it utterly incapable of many necessary services, which the business of the world cannot go on well without. How would you man your fleets, or recruit your armies, all out of good men; they might feel great reluctance against exercising the trade of a butcher, or an ale-house keeper, or brewing poisonous liquors in a wine-cooper's vaults, nor perhaps might it be possible to find the two necessary ministers of justice, a bum-bailiff and a Jack Ketch, among them.

For Providence has so ordered the courses of sublunary affairs, that wickedness, impulse, and folly, are made instrumental to wise and gracious purposes, and one vice is employed to correct the poisonous qualities, and prevent the mischievous effects of another, so that none can be spared unless all are cured, which we must not expect to see done before the coming of the kingdom of the just, wherein, to speak in Scripture language, we hope to be born again and become new creatures. But it becomes not us to intermeddle in that mysterious method of bringing forth good by means of evil, for this is the sacred prerogative of Heaven, reserved among the arcana imperii, the secrets of government: we are to follow the dictates of

Religion and reason, those guides which God has given us for our perpetual direction: whatever they declare productive of nothing but mischief, we are to avoid, to discourage vice wherever we find it, nor ever to do or permit evil that good may come of it, for none but the all-seeing eye can certainly know when good will come of it.

Nevertheless, we may and ought to assist n every work carrying on for the benefit of mankind, though not undertaken with that purity of intention we could wish, and contribute so far as in our little power lies to encourage those customs, aims, and desires, which the world in any respect is better with, than without: for in so doing, and entering upon it with that view, we follow the rule of reason, which is the greater feasible good, and do the Will of God,

For when we survey the state of mankind cast upon them by the dispensations of Providence, we shall hardly believe it intended that all men should be actuated in the general tenor of their conduct by religious principles. Multitudes are born in countries of utter darkness, error, and superstition; many bred up in wickedness and ignorance, without any discernment of the light shining around them; some want capacities to extend a thought beyond sensible objects; some are immersed unavoidably by the prevalence of custom and example in vain projects and worldly cares; many, by the necessity of their situation, forced to attend solely to gaining their livelihood; few, however rightly disposed, are able to trace the rules for their ordinary transactions to the proper source, so are obliged to act under other impulses for want of better direction: yet all these people are made instrumental in carrying on the business of the world, by means of the several impulses actuating their motions.

But the ways of Providence are all gracious, and wise, and holy; the courses of nature in any part of the universe established with a reference to the good of the whole: therefore we may depend that the transactions of the world answer some higher purpose than we are aware of: and since God has so placed the greater part of mankind, that without their own fault, but by the necessity of their situation, they can have only transient, imperfect notions of him, we may conclude there is a work of Providence which may go on without religious sentiments. So that while concurring in measures taken upon impulse, common aims and desires, so far as we perceive them conducive to some temporal good or enjoyment of life, we are still moving in our proper sphere, as citizens of the universe, inheritors of heaven, though religion have no share in those intercourses, unless as our own private motive for joining therein.

18. Let us recollect further, that this life is a preparation for the next, and though it is to be feared that some unhappy wretches make preparation for a miserable life in the next long immeasurable stage of their journey through matter, this is done solely by their own wilful misconduct: therefore, in all the courses men follow, where it was impossible or impracticable for them to have taken better, for want of clearer knowledge than was afforded, we may confide in the goodness and wisdom of God, for having led them into such as will prepare them for the attainment of some future benefit, besides that they reap therefrom in this world.

A boy is put apprentice to a carpenter, he is bid to be diligent in his service, because it will enable him to get a comfortable livelihood, and secure the approbation of his friends: he does so, and afterwards plies industriously to his trade upon those sole motives: perhaps he might have got to be

clerk of the parish, and spent his time in singing psalms, but he never was taught to think seriously of God or religion at all, how then should it come into his head that calling a psalm was more holy employment than sawing a board, or how was it practicable for him to have followed a better course, or upon better views, than he has done?

A religious man may visit about among his neighbours, because the rules of civility require it, though discerning no reference they bear to the great work of his salvation: but you say there is a reference, and he might trace it if he would; perhaps he might, had he so piercing a sight as yours, but if he has not, how is it practicable for him to see as distinctly with weaker optics? or why should he forbear his civilities when he likewise perceives no reference in the omission.

Since then there is a right and a wrong in every choice of action, and the right lies in following the best light that appears at the time, since right actions of all kinds do not always redound to the temporal interests of the performer, and since Providence, by which our lights are dispensed, orders nothing in vain; it may safely be inferred that the transactions and occupations of this world proceeding from common impulses, aims, and desires, not derived from holiness, provided there be no check of conscience warning of a contrariety thereto, bear a share in the preparation for the next. It is not necessary that we should know precisely in what manner they operate, but our persuasion of a universal Providence laying out every stroke in the all-comprehensive plan, so as to introduce and make way for the next in succession, may give us a general idea of their being profitable.

Nevertheless, this idea will become a little less general when we reflect upon what has been urged in the Chapter upon Divine Economy, that Religion and Philosophy alone cannot complete the great work of God, the perfecting the human nature, without aid of human sciences, arts, policy, industry, commerce, and the daily intercourses among mankind: from whence may be gathered, that we all have our several parts allotted to us in one or other of the three branches, and every branch has its number of hands assigned to carry it on: so that though it be necessary there should be some Christians, and some Philosophers, in all degrees of proficiency, yet it is not necessary that all mankind should be such; as we may presume it necessary from experience of fact, that some should pass through many years of life, but not so that others should ever get out of their cradle.

For there is a general interest connecting the whole species together, and as the power of the mighty, the sagacity of the prudent, and knowledge of the learned were given them for the benefit of the public, so the graces of the righteous were not shed upon them for their own sakes, but for advancing the progress of sound Religion in the world, and they receive assistance again from the men of business and worldly pursuits. Thus whoso performs his part well, wherever allotted to him, according to the lights vouchsafed, does all wanted from him towards securing the great common interest whereof himself shall be one day partaker: whether he performs little there is no lack, and whether he performs much there is nothing over.

19. Nor shall we want a gleam of light to illustrate how the just performance of an inferior part may qualify men to act in a higher, when we cast back an eye upon the introduction of religious sentiments and good practical habits into ourselves: for they were born with none of us, nor infused immediately by the water of Baptism. We were sent hither under the sole direction of sense and appetite, affected by pleasures or pains of

the present moment, without knowledge of God, without thought of the morrow, without idea of right and wrong. When memory began to lay in her stores, their frictions among one another struck out the first sparkles of judgment and forecast, which gave us a concern for the next succeeding hours: we could then rejoice in the promise of a plaything to be bought in the afternoon, and dread the thoughts of mamma being told to-morrow, that we had done a naughty trick. In this manner we were furnished with affections and desires whose gratification afforded a present pleasure, though springing from objects at some distance.

As observation increased, aided by instruction and sympathy, desire extended a little further and further in its views, so that we could desire and be pleased with the expectation of pleasures to come a week or a month after: custom gradually strengthened those aims, and enlarged them to take in a series and variety of pleasures as one object. We pretty soon found or were taught, that materials were necessary to be provided, and previous measures to be taken for the attainment of our remote desires: then reason began to open, and we gathered by little pickings the ideas of good and mischievous, of right and wrong.

For good, says Mr. Locke, is that which produces pleasures, and we may define right to be that line of conduct which leads most effectually to the procurement of good or pleasure: thus money is good because it purchases the things that will please us; caution in contracts is right because it helps us to get money or to save it; civility and good humour is right because they enhance the pleasures of conversation. But affection which, as I said above, affords a present pleasure in the movement towards gratification, often fixes wholly upon that, and then becomes a passion or direct appetite caring only for the present moment, or if it does pretend to look beyond, yet when violent it always absorbs the idea of right in that of gratification. A man in a high fit of resentment is assured those revenges are right, which he will abhor in his cooler hours: a young fellow strongly smitten with a pretty face, is positive beyond all power of conviction that the owner of it is a Pamela, possessed of all valuable accomplishments: and every passion or appetite in proportion to the vigour of its impulse, strives to resist and pervert the recommendations of judgment.

It cannot be long before we perceive this quality of appetite and passion to defeat us of the benefits our judgment might have conducted into: from whence we learn the value of prudence, or the estimation of remote enjoyment equally with that near at hand, which is the foundation and root of all the virtues, as well moral as theological; for in him that has no feeling for the future, his fortitude can be nothing but insensibility, his temperance tastelessness, and his justice a compliance with the fashion: he can have neither hope nor charity, and his faith can be no more than unmoving speculation.

Therefore in proportion as we grow in prudence, and as judgment gathers strength to pursue an advantage at some distance against the opposition of appetite, we advance a step forward towards the perfection of our nature. But the first prospects of judgment are scanty, and the objects of its pursuit but little remote: when afterwards we take up manly views, they reach no further than to the pleasurable enjoyment of youth in such course of life, as we have been led to admire by tuition, or sympathy, or some shining appearance striking our fancy; for young people seldom think of what shall happen to them when they grow old, as too remote for their discernment,

nor feel the least reluctance against giving in to practices that manifestly endanger the shortening of their span. Even Religion, in such as are taught it early, would have no force unless backed by near motives: they are told of the blessing of God upon the righteous in this world, that he will prosper them in all their ways, and his judgments perpetually hang over the reprobate: they are reminded of the precariousness of life, how many young people are daily snatched off on a sudden, and they themselves may be taken away this very night: for if they were persuaded of forty years certain before them, and all that time things should go on in the same manner whether they were good or wicked, I question whether any impression could be made that would sink into their judgment. It is not without long time and discipline, and practice, and by gradual progress, that we ever come to look upon a happy eternity as an object of real desire, abstracted from being an escape from its contrary, or to have any imagination how there can be happiness without senses and sensual enjoyments, or how our future condition can be affected by our present behaviour.

Thus the highest prudence springs out of that which had enabled us steadily to pursue our inferior aims against every bias drawing us aside: therefore those persons commonly make the largest proficiency in Religion, who could earliest be brought to consideration and forecast in the little matters then within their sphere, and were most docible to instruction, or observant of the measures taken by their elders; whereas such as have strong passions and get a habit of eagerness in following every present impulse, seldom make any proficiency at all; if they have quick parts they arrive at a great deal of cunning, but rarely any prudence, even in worldly affairs. For it is a valuable point gained to be able to do what appears to be right, however imperfect or delusive that appearance may be: it is still taking the guidance of our judgment though uninformed or misinformed, which will habituate and prepare us for following it more readily at other times, when it shall have received better information.

We have found reason in former chapters to conclude, that the mind always acts by the instrumentality of some material organ, either of the finer or grosser part of our machine, and her powers are greater or less according to the strength and condition of the instruments she has to work with. Now it seems not unlikely, that organ which the mind uses in exerting a resolution to follow the dictates of judgment preferably to present impulse, may be the grand muscle of our spiritual body, wherein its main strength lies; and as this improves in tone and order, that body acquires a vitality of its own, being able to perform its functions without aid of the grosser, from whose mechanical circulations the impulses of appetite and passion, or vehemencies of desire seem to be thrown in.

Therefore, every exercise, even of a mistaken rectitude, helping to strengthen this principal muscle, contributes towards perfecting the spiritual body within us, that it may rise again to new life with better health and powers, for attaining that perfect endurance and forbearance which is our complete redemption, and total deliverance from original sin. For though we should carry none of our knowledge, our habits, nor our ideas with us, but the foundations we shall then have to build our judgment upon should be totally different from the present, yet it is of the utmost importance to have our organs vigorous and pliant, capable of executing such services as judgment shall put them upon: as it was of importance what texture of brain, what proportion of limbs, and suppleness of joints we were born with

into this present world; for our knowledge and acquisitions depend in great measure thereupon, though we brought in no stock of them along with us.

20. Hence it appears, that preparation is made in this life for better enjoyment of the next by the practice of morality and worldly prudence; I do not pretend it is so large as that made by the courses of sound religion, but if it be of any real benefit, it is well worth our attention to assist in promoting it upon every opportunity that falls in the way, for it is a part of our great work, derived directly from the grand intention of glorifying God, by contributing to the good of his creatures in their most important concern.

We have found reasons in the chapter on Redemption to show, that no man fully runs his course or reaches the goal of salvation in this life, but something further remains to be done in the next; and that God in his dispensations of Providence has marked out different lengths here to different persons. Upon which ground we may presume, that such dominion of reason and mastery over the passions as every man is capable of attaining, according to the circumstances wherein he is placed, all that is needful for him to achieve, as being the narrow way and the strait gate by which he may enter into life, though we could not, because having another path assigned us to run in.

But it behoves us to be studious and diligent in assisting our fellow-travellers proceeding in different tracks, upon all occasions where we can; for in so doing we exercise our obedience and our charity. For which purpose it will be necessary to mingle among them, to observe the several aims and ideas of rectitude prevailing with them, and if we do not find them exactly tallying with our own, yet examining which verges nearest thereto, and will add something to the authority of reason over mechanical impulse; attentive to what is practicable in every case, and careful to drive the nail that will go, for a small service is preferable to none at all.

It is better a man should work industriously in his calling, only to raise a competence thereby, than that he should live idle and utterly useless: it is better he should be temperate for his health's sake, than have no check upon his excesses: it is better he should be kept in decency by the fear of censure, than that he should run riot in all kind of licentiousness and wantonness; in all these cases there is some extension of the view beyond present gratification, and some conquest gained over the impetuosity of appetite. And since reason is too feeble in the generality of mankind, ever to do much without taking assistance from the appetites to quell one another, but we must practise the politician's maxim, Divide and command; it will be expedient to learn which of them are best capable of that service, and to encourage such desires, inclinations, pursuits, customs, modes, and attachments as help to keep under the more riotous, because without them it is to be feared the world would rust in idleness, or wallow in the grossest sensuality. For those less mischievous impulses help in some degree to strengthen the rational faculty, and make preparation for larger advances whenever an opening shall be given for carrying them on.

Thus we see there are ways wherein we may pursue our grand intention in the most essential part, that of advancing men a step forwards in their progress to a happy futurity, by means wherein religion and religious sentiments bear no part.

21. But we are not to labour in the cultivation of that principle and those sentiments among men? certainly, with all our might and diligence; for it is the first object of a devout intention to bring all others to act with the

same whenever we can. Nor is this at all contradicted by the foregoing exhortations to assist in the growth of morality, and common prudence: for our attention to short aims and partial services for want of better being practicable, will never abate our vigilance to pursue the ultimate, as often as we can find an avenue leading thereto. A thorough industry catches at every small profit, yet will not be content with common gains if an opportunity occurs of making greater.

But when going to communicate our own spirit to another, it behoves us to take care that it be genuine and well rectified, for we cannot infuse a purer than we have ourselves, but we may infuse it not so pure as we have ourselves: therefore caution must be used that what we impart be of the right sort, and do not corrupt in the passage. If there be anything of terror, or servility, or anxious solicitude, or vanity, or ill nature, or narrow selfishness, or other passion intermingled, it is ropy and imperfect. For there are religious passions as well as sensual, and both are alike natural enemies to judgment, yet both must be employed to assist in weakening a worse enemy: they first afford room for judgment to exert a vigour by joining in with them against the common adversary, who being drove out of the field they ought then to be discarded, or else they will become our masters unless some other passion can be called in to aid in keeping them under.

It is the want of this caution that draws people to be righteous overmuch, not observing that a zeal of devotion which was once a necessary servant of righteousness, may become a formidable enemy; but this world is a school wherein we are always to learn, nor ever think ourselves perfect masters in our science of rectitude, or be too sure that our rules of it are infallible; it is a perpetual warfare wherein we must keep a vigilant eye as well upon friends as upon declared enemies. According to the capacities of men or the situation whereto they are respectively arrived in their progress, that may be holiness in one which would be superstition in another, and the same point a step forwards to one which would be a step backwards to another. Therefore it will behove us to proceed with discretion, observing diligently the several bearings of our ultimate aim, and the lines pointing to it from every quarter, that so we may discern what movement will make the nearest practicable approach from the spot where each man stands, and in the circumstances of his situation.

Nor is discretion more needful in fixing upon the particular point we would conduct to, than in the manner of conducting: men never were so well drove as led, and in these countries, God be thanked, they will not drive at all. I look upon it as a blessing, because if you could drive them they would follow the letter of your directions; to lead they must understand the spirit, or they will not budge an inch after you. But the apprehensions of men are so various, that by speaking a truth one may chance to convey the idea of an arrant falsehood, and recommend a maxim perfectly salutary to one's self, which might be poisonous to be followed by another.

Yet if the truth were ever so clear or the maxim unexceptionable, still if there be anything distasteful accompanying the delivery, it will not be received: for there is a stoutness, and an aversion to inferiority rooted in all men, which must be managed with great delicacy. All parade of extraordinary righteousness, austerity, stiffness, tutorage, expression of contempt or pity for the ungodly, or even looks of censure where it is not expressed by words, which very good people are sometimes too prone to indulge in, will certainly set them against you. They take these things for

insults upon their understanding, or attempts upon their liberty, so will go in direct contradiction to what you would have, merely to show they do not value you, but will assert their rights.

Therefore the prime caution to be observed by him that would work upon another, is to be aware of his own vanity, remembering that other folks have theirs too, which is extremely quick of sensibility, and must be tenderly handled; for nothing is so detestable to the vain, as his own picture in another's countenance or carriage.

The safest way of dealing with this touchy part in human nature, is to watch opportunities for insinuating what is profitable imperceptibly, when men are disposed to receive it; to manage if possible like Socrates, bringing them to find out themselves what you want to inform them of, and desire of their own accord what you wish them to pursue; to carry no appearance of wisdom, or sanctity or eagerness, upon your brow, but seeming to act unconcernedly, even when you have the most important designs in your heart; to study that ease spoken of in § 13, of CHAP. XXI. which is the product of expertness; and to depend more upon example than document, arguing not as a disputant who means to confute his adversary, but as one deliberating upon a concern of his own, and striving to make your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

But then this shine must not be a glare of admiration, which might shock their vanity and endanger the nourishing your own, but a display of real advantage and unaffected enjoyment: for this is the most effectual method of bringing them to glorify God heartily, if they can be made sensible by ocular demonstration, that his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. Which demonstration is not to be exhibited by laboured encomiums upon the happiness of a pious life, or exclamations upon the joyful transports of religious exercises, which are often so counterfeit as to deceive those who make them, for the world will seee through the veil, and discern that you are not really so delighted as you persuade yourself: but this light will shine with brightest lustre, when it flows naturally from the state of the mind beaming by undesigned emanation through the countenance and deportment: when, while following your own pursuits, thinking nothing of the gazers around, they can yet discern a cheerful serenity within, a contentedness, a continual satisfactory engagement, a plenty of attainable desires, an unruffled patience, an exemption from wants or cravings from turbulent and tormenting passions.

Thus you see it is for the good of your neighbour, as well as for your own solace, to make your Religion as pleasurable a work as possible; which it can never be unless accommodated to the common occurrences of life. I know no better way to do this, than by the solid conviction and intimate persuasion herein before recommended, which may bring us to consider it, not as an obligation, nor command, nor a deliverance from dreadful miseries, nor yet a ladder to high reputation and self-applause, but as a profitable scheme; and make us seek a profit from it upon every occasion that can happen.

I have before acknowledged it a vain imagination to think we can ever thus completely adjust it to all cases and situations in this vale of darkness and imbecility; yet I conceive a common man may succeed so far, as, if not to become a warming light to others, at least to feel by his own experience, that what little progress he can make is well worth the trouble of pursuing it.

22. For my own part I pretend to have run no great lengths of proficiency, nor been able to lay out my measures upon my own plan: if I have now and then hit upon something plausible in the course of these Chapters, little is to be inferred from thence, for it is not uncommon for men to talk better than they can act, and enforce a sentiment upon others which they cannot raise in themselves. I every day experience the truth of what I have laid down, that conviction is not the same as persuasion; for many things appearing with the clearest evidence to my understanding, are very hardly brought to possess my imagination. I act often upon impulse, sometimes for want of a better guidance, at others because unable to resist it. I am sometimes thrown into doubt by contrary appearances, sometimes left in darkness for want of any light; unable to trace my references or discern what relation my common employments bear to the grand concern: so am forced to take direction from custom, or example, or other people's opinions, or from some of the internal senses, or inclination, or fancy, and when I can discover my road often find it too arduous or too obstructed for me to travel.

Nevertheless, what pittance of proficiency I have made, has turned wholly to my benefit, and in no respect that I can perceive lessened the enjoyment of life: if it has debarred me from some gratifications of fond desire and appetite, they were such as I must have paid dearly for in the consequences: if it has drove me upon some toils and troubles, they were made easy by the satisfaction in the performance, and rewarded by the subsequent advantages they earned.

I have made shift to trace the reference in some of my common employments to the great design, and thereby turned trifles into matters of moment: have deduced some of my ordinary rules of behaviour from their original source, which gives a solid complacence in the practice of them. When surprised or overpowered by impulse, I esteem it a damage sustained; when having the good luck to resist it, I regard that as a profit made; my ill successes in this struggle are frequent enough, yet they do not drive me into despondency, as well knowing that the strength to will is given us as well as the power to do, and it suits with my fundamental principle to rest contented with the portion both of spiritual and worldly estate that God has bestowed on me, for what pretence have I to superior graces above my fellows? Yet this content does not abate my readiness to make improvements whenever a fair opportunity offers, by which attention to improve all advantages occurring, I think my conduct is become a little more uniform and significant than heretofore, and engaging employment found for some hours which otherwise might have passed unavailing or irksome. When dangers, pains, troubles, and disappointments, though not very severe nor grevious, fall upon me, I still suffer by them, for the machine is too strong for the manager; yet less and less as my principle gathers vigour, which as soon as it can find room to enter, takes off their pressure and entirely dissipates the remains of them that would hang upon the mind.

If I pretend to stand exempt from vanity, it would be a prevarication, for I often perceive its attacks, and doubt not it has an influence in many instances where I do not perceive it: but my idea of intrinsic equality and the general interest is the most averse to its motions, giving me when lively a concern and sympathy in the successes of others, inclining me to think the best of every one as a fellow labourer, made instrumental, whether he knows it or no, in the same common service, the perfecting of the species: so that I can sometimes find justifications and excuses for person

with whom I contest, regard vices and follies as an unhappy distemper of the mind, consider the patient as a congenial Psyche incommodiously lodged, a wandering star in the lowest parts of its orbit, and envy no advantage or pleasures that I do not apprehend terminating in mischief. If I fall deficient in the common business of life or social offices, this must be imputed to my natural and contracted infirmities, for my principle urges me to continual unhurrying activity in pursuit of some end, in performing any little good office, or obliging compliance or entertainment when nothing more important is at hand.

As my dependence rests solely upon the largeness of the divine bounty, I can sometimes, when that idea fills my thoughts, survey the provisions, the gratifications, the pastimes, the joys, the comforts poured around with unsparing hand upon man, and beast, and bird, and fish, and insect, with more delight than the finest landscape I ever beheld; nor is the pleasure unfrequently doubled by the reflection of having such a taste, which I value at a higher rate than that of architecture, painting, or music, not as a more brilliant accomplishment, but as a more beneficial possession.

For the greater fund of happiness I can find in the world, the fuller manifestation I have of the divine goodness, and the better grounds of expectation for myself, as having no warrant to look for more than my proportionable share of the blessings redundant from that scource. While I can hold this prospect in view, the evils scattered among it lessen by comparison: for how many more houses of commodious habitation, of business, of entertainment, of jollity, are there, than gaols and hospitals? how many more doors rattling with peals of visiting thunder, than knockers tied up? how many more provisions are brought in the markets and wares in the shops, than drugs dispensed by the apothecary? how many more hours have we of engagement, of promising pursuit, of tranquillity, content, diversion, and merriment, than of sickness, pain, or melancholy?

If there be any exception to the indulgence of these ideas, it is that they make me too partial to that hypothesis which seems to glorify God in the highest conceivable degree, by raising the proportion of good to evil throughout the universe, and consequently throughout the period of every creature's existence, so high as millions of millions of millions to one: which whether it be true or no, yet if firmly believed might render us insensible to the troubles of life by the joy that is set before us, and lighten all the labours by representing them as necessary to secure the enjoyment of such an immense estate.

When the seasons of grace are upon me, which I reckon those wherein the main principle is immediately operating either in devotion, or contemplation, or study, or the practice of something apprehended a good work, though much versed in the microscope, I could never yet discover any supernatural impulse in those experiences, nor feel the finger of God nor hear his whispers; yet I see him clearly through the telescope fitted up with the object-glass of reason, and the eye-glass of faith, one to converge the rays collected by the other, but at an immense distance both of time and place, working in the birth of nature, providing with unerring certainty those causes which by a million of complicated and intricate windings have produced the effect I now feel.

Upon all these occasions there is a calm joy, a complacence, a satisfation at least equal to that of any successful pursuits, pleasing reflections, or noblest aims of other kinds that I have had experience of, flowing spon-

taneously without any force upon the imagination to throw them up, and when so coming they are most genuine and most striking.

For our fondness of intense pleasures leads into gross mistakes, when we think to stretch appetite beyond its natural tone; neither the pleasures of religion nor of sense will be increased by being forced; he that takes pains to believe himself vastly delighted, is in reality scarce delighted at all; he is only fond of the credit of it in his own fancy; but true joy will operate by its native vigour without wanting our aid to give it motion. It is our business to ply diligently to our work, to use the means of grace, and follow those courses that are productive of satisfaction, and then we need not fear having enough of it by such reflections as will naturally spring therefrom, without our further seeking.

23. But why do I dwell upon the little benefits accruing from this principle in an imperfect creature but feebly possessed with it, and not carry on the thoughts to that full unceasing satisfaction, which must flow from it when vigorous, perfect, and general? If men of sagacity would examine the grounds of it impartially, so as to render the evidence clear and familiar to their thoughts beyond all danger of subsequent doubt or mistrust, and then reduce it to practical rules so as to have a reason for pursuing all their other sciences, arts, schemes, employments, and manners of behaviour deducible therefrom; their authority and example would soon draw the rest of the world after them, as their skill in communicating ideas might render the methods of following them, according to different situations and circumstances, intelligible to every one.

For we see by experience of the ruling passions, that a distant aim impressed strongly upon the imagination is capable of employing men for years, and shaping all other desires to a conformity therewith. And as all men have some value for their judgment, choosing rather to follow it than not, when there lies no impediment in the way, the general idea of right might always influence them, but that the current rules of rectitude are not adapted to their particular circumstances, urging them frequently to impracticable performances, and resistance of appetite they are not able to make, which gives them a distaste to rectitude itself, as being a romantic or troublesome thing; whereas were it clearly discerned what is the nearest feasible advance thereto, and guidance of appetite within their forces to practise in each succeeding moment, they might come into a liking of it, and continually improve their strength.

The transition from rectitude to the grand intention is very short, for every right action is a doing the will of God, and every man feels a satisfaction in the consciousness of having done right, when he happens to find ground for it, which makes men so ready to deceive themselves in the motives of their proceedings, because by this means they get a false bottom just sufficient to support a present consciousness together with the satisfaction accompanying, though it will fail them in time of trial when the weight of close examination comes to press upon it. Therefore if they could be shown which were the rightest courses of those that are pleasant or easy, and that the preference of them would bear a reference to the grand intention, they would grow more and more in love with rectitude on finding pleasure capable of being turned into it, until by degrees things would become pleasing because right, and because admitting the reference, from troublesome or painful that they were before.

Thus it is owing to the want of that science in the world, that mankind

is left in darkness and misery, under the dominion of passion, appetite, fears, vexations, and worldly cares: for a way might be found by directing the choice of pleasures, through which they could and would travel to the land of light, liberty, and happiness.

When this way shall open no man can tell: I much question whether it will happen in the year of the world six thousand six hundred and sixty-six, and have some doubt that it may not happen at all upon this earth, because apprehending it designed for the use of more passengers than this earth can contain. As I pretend to no revelations I shall not attempt to find out the day of which no man knoweth, nc not the Son, but the Father only: nevertheless, as the profit of reason, presaging upon observation of the divine economy exemplified in the history of mankind, I presume to augurate that it will happen in some part of our journey through matter, when the ten righteous described in Chap. XIX. shall arise. Their wisdom will soon draw others resembling them nearest to perfect themselves upon their model: as the numbers increase, the propriety of their conduct, the justness of their measures, the harmony of their disposition, the amiableness of their characters, and happiness of their lives must become manifest to all, and excite a general admiration with a desire of partaking in the like: their unanimity among themselves, their benevolence to others, their sober discretion and unperverted sagacity will render clear to every capacity, how their example may be followed by persons differently qualified according to the variety of situations and circumstances among them, so that there will be no doubt, uncertainty, nor disappointment, to discourage anybody in his progress: as the bent of imitation becomes general, the torrent of custom must drive in the rest, and happy experience will effectually secure those who have once made the trial, so that the whole species will be bound together in one bond of wisdom, love, and happiness: and then shall commence the kingdom, or more probably republic of the just, or if they have a king, it will be none other than God himself, whose glory, and the ministration in whose designs of Providence will be the fundamental law and basis of their constitution.

In the mean while let us make it our ultimate aim and constant intention to advance this joyful event, though as yet lying at an immense distance from us: for, to resume the Stoical metaphor, we are still deeply merged under water, and are so connected together that none of us can breathe the free air until the whole body approaches near the surface, which it is rising towards by slow and scarce perceptible degrees. So that if we can a little ease the weight in any part, or give a lift of one inch to any single member, it is a service to the whole, and a service to ourselves, by speeding the time that is to bring on our total emersion.

Therefore it is our business to observe what gradations of depth men severally lie under, and contrive how we may employ our opportunities for helping them. He that is vain of his piety, his reason, or his public services, hangs a little higher than while he was vain of doing mischief, of follies, or trifles; to be superstitious is something of a rise above hardened insensibility; industry, forecast, economy, generosity, courteousness, is a degree of advance from idleness, giddiness, dissipation, avarice, and ill-nature; the man of pleasure, who chooses discreetly such among them as are innocent, swims a span over him who is hurried to and fro by every present appetite, happening to strike strongly upon his fancy.

As the good of mankind in this world is made our direction for attaining the good of the other, those are the measures of rectitude which upon every

occasion will yield the greater enjoyment or temporal good to ourselves or others, or the public; computation being made upon the whole amount of their produce. But since through our inexperience and shortness of our views, this direction cannot always be had, we must take it from those rules which have prevailed among the most judicious and discerning, in the several branches of conduct; always preferring the higher and best authorized before others of inferior weight. And so far as we can act under them with a consciousness of rectitude, either during the performance or upon subsequent reflection, in those instances, whether we be eating or drinking, or whatsoever we be doing, we act in pursuance of our great intention, and may be said to do them all directly or remotely, for the glory of God.

CHAP. XXVII.

DOING AS WE WOULD BE DONE BY.

Among all the rules which may be employed as mediums in carrying on the reference between our ultimate aim and the common transactions of life, there is none better capable of that service, than this of doing as we would be done by. For it connects immediately with the love of our neighbour, by which we most evidently manifest our love of God, for every man will readily give the same treatment to one whom he loves as himself, that he would wish to receive himself, and it is applicable to all our intercourses among one another; because in business, in passing judgment, in discourse, whether serious or amusing, in diversion, in merriment, there is a disposition to serve, to be candid, to oblige, and to please, which a man would be glad to find in others, and may serve him for a rule to return the like to them again.

This precept is enjoined by Christ as the sum of all those delivered by any revelation before: whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets. Human reason was clear-sighted enough to perceive the salutary effects of this maxim, which among Philosophers and Moralists, has been commonly entitled the golden rule, to express its supereminence in value above all others; as well knowing that nothing contributes so much to peace, and order, and happiness in the world, as an equitable temper disposed to weigh the wants and desires of other persons in equal balance with our own.

And this seems to be the first moral sense that sprouts within us: when reason begins to open, it gives us a concern for the morrow, which lays the foundation of prudence; after having shot its beams forwards to discover the future, it then spreads them in width, making us sensible of the pains and pleasures whereof we see expressions around us. For compassion makes its appearance very early, but compassion is nothing else than sympathizing with the distresses beheld; and the idea of injury cannot subsist without it, wherefore we commonly introduce that idea into children by questions of how they would like to be so served themselves. Thus as prudence consists in a quick sensibility of good and evil to come, so equitableness consists in a like quick sensibility of the feelings and apprehensions of another: and both alike serve as auxiliaries to judgment, by possessing the imagination with objects to set in balance against the present impulses of appetite.

From hence we may learn what course is to be taken for gaining this

faculty, namely, by placing ourselves in imagination as exactly as possible in the very situation of other persons, striving to enter into their sentiments, their conceptions, their tastes, their motives, their joys, and their sorrows, considering what we should wish, or do, or comprehend, under the same circumstances, whereto it will be a help if we can recollect any similar situation wherein we have stood ourselves.

But this, like all other habits, is only to be acquired by continual application and practice, which may inure the imagination to a readiness and vigour in performing its office. As an inducement to enter upon such practice we may reflect, that we are nothing in ourselves but what God by his courses of nature and fortune has made us, that to them it was wholly owing we were so born, so endowed, so bred, so supplied, so improved as we be, and if he had pleased, we might have stood in the same case in all respects with any persons we see, and they might have been placed in ours.

Then to encourage us in this exercise we may consider, it is not impossible there may be a rotation through all the states of Being in the Universe, so that every perceptive individual passes in turn through every one of them: which thought must make equity a matter of prudence, because the case of every other will sooner or later actually become our own, and it is our interest to make every part in this theatre of the Universe easy, which we shall one day be put to act ourselves.

But if this appears a romantic imagination, we have experience of the continual vicissitudes and turns of affairs in this world, so that we know not how soon we may need the benefit of an equitable temper and good will in the very person, to whom we may now set the precedent: besides that example, sympathy, and amiableness of the proceeding, may generate the like disposition, and procure us the like benefit from others who are witnesses of our conduct. Or, at all events, if we have any persuasion of the divine Equity, this will insure us a personal interest in all the good and evil we bring upon our neighbour, as being in some shape or other certainly to return upon our own head.

If then it be our own concern to act equitably in all our dealings with all, it must be so likewise to observe diligently their characters, their conceptions, their views, and every present circumstance that may afford us better direction for so doing, and to stifle every selfish appetite or narrow prejudice which might darken or obstruct us in our scrutiny.

2. Nevertheless, there are some persons who do not want an equitable disposition, yet find themselves obstructed in the exercise of it by a seeming contrariety therein to the rules of justice, and common prudence prevailing among mankind, or are misled by losing sight of the foundation whereon it rests, the purpose to be effected by it. The obstructions and apparent contrariety spring from their confining it within too narrow a compass, taking in only single objects in cases where the consequence of their procedure will extend to many. They scruple to prosecute a thief because they should not like to be punished for what they have done amiss themselves; to sue a debtor to judgment and execution, because they should think it a hardship to be so pressed and straightened; to deny a beggar, because they should find uneasiness in a refusal of what they earnestly desired; to be hard or reserved in a bargain, because they should wish to have all others open and easy with them. But it should be remembered that equity, bearing a near relation to love of one's neighbour, ought to extend the same compass, that is, to all who may be any way affected by the thing we are doing: and

as we must not love one neighbour so as to neglect the others, so neither must we suffer our equity to one person to make us iniquitous to all the rest.

Therefore in sympathizing with the criminal, the debtor, the necessitous, and the negotiant, we do well; because this will preserve us from animosity, from hard-heartedness and over-reaching: but our sympathy ought not to rest there, we must carry it on to others who may be endamaged in their properties by our remissness, who may be drawn into negligence and wretchedness by our encouragement of idleness, to the public who may suffer damage thereby in the products of labour, to our families who may be injured by the foregoing our rights or softness in contracts, to the simple who may be hurt by our example, rendering virtue distasteful and ridiculous.

If we survey all around us to observe what mischief or inconveniences may accrue any where, and reflect how we should like to have those mischiefs fall upon ourselves, then, but not till then, we shall be fully qualified to judge what is equitable: for equity is not herself until she can show a like regard to all whom the measure she prompts to may concern. But men are so apt to be guided in every thing by present impulse, they cannot sympathize unless with objects striking their senses, by which means the golden rule of reason becomes transmuted into the base metal of passion, as all other religious and moral sciences may do by ill management; nor can it be restored to standard purity again, until brought to take all the good and evil flowing from our conduct into account, fairly balancing one against the other.

But since we seldom have sagacity or clearness of prospect enough to see the remote consequences of things, we must take direction from the best authorized rules of behaviour in matters of severity, contention, opposition, caution, and regard to private interest in dealings, trusting that they were established upon good foundations for the benefit of mankind: therefore by breaking them we shall so far as in us lies defeat that benefit, and do a certain injury somewhere, though we may not discern where; but our equity, if we have it genuine, will withhold us from doing what we should not like, though to persons unknown, for sake of gratifying one or two whom we have before our eyes.

And this prevalence of impulse above judgment likewise misleads us in the application of our equity, which ought to follow the same rules with the love of our neighbour: but if our self-love be fond, indiscreet, intemperate, pernicious, and destructive of our real interests, we shall do him no good, nor fulfil our duty by loving him in the same manner as we do ourselves.

When we entice another into debaucheries, lay temptations in his way, or provide fuel for his intemperate cravings, it is no justification to say, that we should like prodigiously to be so dealt with ourselves; for by indulging a present desire to the future disappointment of those we shall have at anther time, which is the case of all vicious and imprudent pleasures, we are unequitable to ourselves and to our own desires, which are our best friends, if their friendship be impartially cultivated; therefore if we proceed the same way with another, we must necessarily be unequitable to him, departing from the spirit of our rule while seeming to adhere to the letter: just as if a man, who in a fit of strong despair wishes somebody will shoot him through the head, should out of an equitable disposition strive to pistol as many others as he could.

It is pity but parents would take this matter into serious consideration, instead of valuing themselves upon their inability to deny the pretty creature whatever it eagerly wants; for they often ruin their children by giving the same indulgence to their cravings, and fancies, and follies, as they take for their own. And sometimes the like weakness draws men into an injurious compliance with others not so nearly related to them. But as charity begins at home, so must her twin sister equity; for he that has no prudence for himself cannot have a genuine charity to his neighbour, nor until he has got rid of all partiality to any particular inclination of his own, is he completely qualified to practise the golden rule.

And the art of conducting impartially between remote and near gratification may be best learned by beginning to practise it upon another; for as the skin is nearer than the shirt, as the direct view of an object is something brighter than the reflection of it in a mirror, so our fellow feelings are not quite so strong as our immediate sensations, nor the appetites they excite quite so ungovernable; they do not so closely fetter the judgment, which is therefore more at liberty to observe, and better able to execute, what is expedient in another's case than our own: and after having forced our friends into profitable self-denials in love to them, we shall learn thereby to do the same with ourselves, equity and sympathy helping us to go through a discipline we had exercised upon persons, in whose feelings we had a sensible concern.

3. But as a temper truly equitable extends to all persons who may come within its influence, so it will to all branches of treatment in our intercourses among them; it will not only incline us to do as we would be done by, but likewise to think as we would be thought by. We are angry at being slandered, ridiculed, undervalued, triumphed over, though but in thought, if we find it out; at our actions being misinterpreted, our words unfavourably construed, our reasons unattended to, our meaning perverted, and our conduct ascribed to the worst motives it could proceed from: we wish to have all men candid and even favourable to us, desirous of finding grounds to give us their approbations, ready to make all excuses and allowances for our mistakes, to allow us the full merit we deserve; to presume our intentions were good, to enter fairly and willingly into our sentiments, and give us the due share of their esteem: why then should we refuse them what we like so well for ourselves, or practise upon them what we are so vehemently averse to have practised upon ourselves? This certainly is the most opposite temper possible to equitableness, and can proceed from nothing but a narrow selfishness, regardless of everything but the indulgence of an evil habit or fond humour of vanity.

Therefore it is incumbent upon us to eradicate this evil weed, than which there is none more obstructive to the growth of charity, for we can never heartily love those whom we think ill of: but as habits are not presently to be rooted out, it requires our continual application and vigilance to wither it by degrees. For this purpose it will be expedient to study the art of penetrating into the conceptions of persons we have to deal with, not judging them by our own ideas, but by those we may suppose them to occupy their imagination, distinguishing between the outward act and the motives from whence it may proceed, considering how many various apprehensions may give birth to the same action, and seeking impartially for the most commendable, or the most innocent.

It is too common for people who despise the vulgar for want of sense and breeding, nevertheless to expect the same nice discernment and exact pro-

priety from them, which they value themselves so highly upon; which seems a most absurd notion inconsistent with itself, whereas it were more rational to consider their education, ways of living, and customary trains of thinking, to place ourselves in their situation, and then examine what ideas we should be likely to have. We may remember likewise that other people have their passions, their prejudices, their favourite aims, their fears, their cautions, their interests, their sudden impulses and varieties of apprehension, as well as ourselves; we may strive to recollect how those several causes have operated upon us, in how many different lights we have beheld the same object, and how often we have judged the same things right which we now condemn in them. For I have remarked in the Chapter upon that faculty, of how great importance it is to have a well-disciplined imagination capable of casting up in lively ideas whatever figures may be wanting for the services of reason.

But such expertness is very difficult to be attained, for present objects and the mechanical workings of our temperament so occupy our thoughts for the most part, that we cannot easily recall the state of ideas in our mind yesterday, nor scarce believe our apprehensions were ever different from what they are now, much less can we form a tolerable representation of those in another person. But the harder the art, the more diligently ought we to apply our endeavours towards making some proficiency in it, as being a very valuable acquisition which will prove beneficial to us in many respects not only for its own immediate uses, but for the furtherance it will give to other improvements.

4. For it will help to banish animosity, rancour, envy, censoriousness, detestation, and contempt from our hearts, for we like to have none of those sentiments entertained against ourselves, and may learn to forgive our brother until seventy times seven, by reflecting upon the indulgence we desire for our own miscarrriages.

In cases of severity, opposition, and displeasure, it will hold our regards fixed upon the necessity, never suffering us to exceed the length driven to by that, nor to do anything we must not acknowledge reasonable to be done to us upon the like occasion; and the consciousness of having accustomed ourselves to proceed in this manner will render our contentions compatible with charity, and remove any scruples in the exercise of them. It will bring us familiarly acquainted with the infirmities of human nature the frequency of misapprehensions and partial views, and how apt the common passions incident to all men are to drive them into unwarrantable proceedings; thereby teaching us to stand upon our guard even against friends, yet without abating our friendship, as likewise to defend ourselves against injurious treatment from others, looking upon it as an unlucky accident without doubling the pressure by the vexation arising from an opinion of their malignancy.

It will put a check upon our desire of excelling, representing it as an attempt to bring that mortification upon others, we constantly feel on being excelled. It will teach us to bear troubles and disappointments by considering them as the common lot of human life, from which we have no better title to exemption than anybody else. It will keep our desires within the bounds of reason and innocence, thereby doubling the satisfaction taken in gratifying them, with the consciousness of having been careful to admit such only as were injurious to nobody. It will enable us to participate in the pleasures of others, make us glad on seeing, and therefore quick in finding out their comforts, engagements, relishes, and enjoyments, accus-

joined to contemplate the brightest parts of every prospect, and even capable of receiving alleviation from the thought of joys flowing elsewhere, at seasons when we have none of our own. This may prove the most efficacious pill to purge melancholy, the best music to silence the common lamentations of a wicked and wretched world, discovering daily new sources of solacement we had not discerned before, and which the selfish and narrow-souled never can discern, displaying the unsparing bounties of Providence, giving us a better opinion of our existence, and gradually introducing serenity, content, and cheerfulness of mind.

Nor does anything so much assist to enlarge our understanding or improve our judgment; for it is the confining our ideas, the glare of a few objects possessing the imagination forcibly, that misleads us into errors, so that we have not freedom for our thoughts, but our very reasonings proceed by mechanical impulse: whereas if we could preserve an impartiality to every suggestion occurring, all would go on calmly and fairly, each consideration have its due weight, and the decision must be our own, as being truly the child of understanding.

For there is a conformity in our manner of judging upon all occasions, the same sobriety or intemperance that prevails in one will be likely to prevail in all the rest: therefore, as I said before, a man must learn equitableness to himself, before he can be qualified to deal equitably with his neighbour; but every exercise of sobriety in either branch will encourage the growth of it in the other, and besides will supply new lights to our understanding. By inuring ourselves to enter exactly and fairly into the conceptions of other persons, we may discover something for our own advantage: for no man knowingly embraces error, but is always led into it by some specious appearance of truth, which if you can find out, you may chance to make a better use of it than he does, or what is more, may chance to show him in what particular circumstance it is fallacious; at least by possessing all his ideas you may make your own clear to him much better than in the common way of playing at cross purposes, where each party has a quite different sense of the subjects and arguments handled between them.

It is the practice of tracing the sources of men's ideas that brings us acquainted with human nature, overthrows the vulgar notion of each man having a particular nature of his own, but shows that human nature is the same in all, establishes our intrinsic equality, ascribing the difference of character to the difference of bodily temperament, or action of external causes.

By using ourselves to take concern in the interests of all we see, we shall easily learn to take the like in those of Beings unseen, the uses of which sentiment have been displayed in former Chapters: and since we commonly frame our idea of God by aid of archetypes found within ourselves, our equitableness and the charity constantly accompanying it, will give us a clearer, fuller apprehension of the divine Equity and Goodness, from whence follows the mutual connection of interests between all perceptive members of the universe: that solid basis upon which I have attempted in the course of this work to try how all the principles and precepts of Religion, morality, and common prudence, in several stories supported by one another, may be rationally erected.

CHAP. XXVIII.

INDOLENCE.

Among all the indulgences abounding throughout the world, there is none so general as that of Indolence; for many men live with very few pleasures, not from a scruple of conscience but because there would be too much trouble in the pursuit; but they are no gainers by the bargain, for it is better to be busy in contrivances for pleasure than doing nothing at all. And indeed this indulgence lies at the bottom as a principal ingredient of all the rest: for what is it makes men led so tamely by every present impulse, but because there is a trouble in resisting it? what keeps them in slavery under an undelighting habit, but because it would cost them pains to break it? what occasions them to faint in midway of attaining a noble virtue or useful accomplishment, but because the perseverance grows toilsome? For as the poet said, incessant labour overcomes all things, so whenever we are overcome, it is owing to the want of sufficient application, because if the thing attempted was really above our forces, the failure is not a defect, nor leaves us in a worse condition to cope with another adversary.

In this application the life of the soul properly consists, for the clearest discernment wherein the mind is always barely passive, shows only the vividness and good colour of our ideas; it is by executing the resolves of our judgment whether in meditation or bodily exertion, that our activity and vigour appear. While driven by impulse of appetite, how strenuous soever our exertions, the machine impelling us is the agent, and we nothing more than instruments employed thereby; but whatever we do in executing the judgment of our understanding, is entirely our own act, and the machine in turn becomes the instrument. Therefore by exercises of this faculty, we strengthen the powers of our mental organization, giving, if I may so speak, a tone to its muscles; by controlling of appetite we detach it a little from the mechanical springs, gain it something more freedom to play, and prepare it to act alone when separated from the gross corporeal frame, upon our dissolution.

Whether this be admitted or no as a physical conjecture of the manner wherein we are profited by exercises of virtue, there is nobody will doubt that a steady application to the rule of judgment or rectitude tends to meliorate and perfect our better part, but it is not so easy to see wherein this application consists: it is commonly supposed by those who seem its greatest admirers to be something violent and laborious, by which notion they exhaust themselves often to very little purpose, and deter others from using any endeavours at all; but in my humble apprehension more is to be expected from its continuity than its strength. For appetite, as just now observed, frequently impels to very strenuous exertion, but there are religious, philosophic, and moral appetites as well as natural and worldly, which without great caution cannot be distinguished from the resolutions of judgment: therefore if a man could observe continually the directions of his understanding, that would inform him when to bestir himself with all his might, and when to proceed with a gentle hand.

For there are are many things which are best done when done with ease, and where violence, eagerness, and solicitude spoil the performance: this

is true in familiar conversation, in the common forms of behaviour, and most of our social intercourses, where earnestness and anxiety are as faulty as a total inattention: even in business and study, though there must be a labour of thought proportionable to the work, yet there is a virtue in taking care it do not exceed that proportion, for by holding the eye too close to an object we shall discern it as imperfectly as upon only casting a careless glance. In general all arts and sciences are laborious at first, but their perfection lies in being able to manage them with ease.

Tranquillity and ease of mind is the sole aim that patience drives at, and there is a virtue in keeping one's self unconcerned at abuse or slander, unattentive to noise and impertinence, unruffled by disappointment, unhurried in dangers or alluring pursuits, and even in a sick man composing himself to sleep amidst his pains, when told it is expedient for his health; which he will be better able to do for having used to follow the guidance of his judgment, than another who had always given way to his indolence.

Religion itself, our most important concern, does not demand a continual stretch of the mind, and is by that error too frequently corrupted into righteousness overmuch: but it is not thus that the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force; for the incense of thanksgiving casts up the sweetest odour when streaming spontaneously from the heart, intercession is best when most willingly made, confession flows sincerer from a calm, impartial examination into the state of our mind, than a laboured aggravation of the worst features there; petition preferred in vehemence and anxiety cannot well consist with that resignation which is necessary to render it acceptable; and upon the whole, if our devotion be overstrained it becomes unsuitable for practice, incapable of joining in one system with the common rules of behaviour, so as by mingling its influence among them to sanctify the general tenor of our lives.

2. Men who have a notion of being industrious, often think themselves under an obligation of doing great things thereby, but this is not the true industry springing from a steady application to the resolves of judgment, it is the impulse of some passion, generally of fear in religious matters, and of greediness or vanity in worldly concerns, all driving impetuously at some fancied purpose, without taking check or guidance from the reins of reason. For where that can be heard, it will suggest that the first consideration to be taken on engaging in a pursuit is its practicability and suitableness to our situation: we are not to choose our work, but to do that which is set us, for we are servants, employed each at his station, to carry on a part in the great scheme of Providence; we must not take upon us to execute one another's tasks because they are more important or more laborious, we are to observe our call and to obey it.

Therefore let us survey our forces, our opportunities, and the demands for industry within our compass to answer: for if by our particular turn of mind, our education or condition of life, we have a chance of becoming instructive or exemplary, then are we called to hard study, or assiduity in religious exercises, or more than ordinary circumspection and strictness of conduct, as the case shall require: if by our talents, our family, or large connections, we are qualified for public services, then are we called to work faithfully and strenuously in the service of the public: or if engaged in some toilsome profession, or it happens that some beneficial work offers occasionally which cannot be achieved without strong exertion of our powers: in all these cases let us not be sparing of our pains, not grudge our labour,

for the utmost we can do is well bestowed when it will turn to good advantage.

But if our powers are small, our condition unfavourable, or the occasion presents nothing that may be accomplished by painful application, then to spend ourselves in fruitless or needless attempts of doing something extraordinary would be a waste of strength and an intemperance: industry then becomes vigilance, attentive to acquit ourselves of the little matters before us with discretion and propriety; for to take as much pains in deliberating what tour we shall mark out for an evening walk as if we were purchasing an estate, is an abuse of thought; in such matters it is much better to follow constantly what direction our judgment shall give us by intuition upon a transient glance.

But when we see men bestir themselves violently and eagerly, it proceeds as often from indolence as from industry; they while away their time in trifles through an unwillingness to set to the work, and then are drove hard to dispatch in a few minutes what might have been done easily in an hour; or they do not care for the trouble of digesting their schemes, but being sparing of their pains and afraid of bestowing more than necessary, they go about the business in a slovenly manner which proves ineffectual, and so they are forced to do it over again, whence the common observation that lazy folks take most pains; or they want to have the task over, and so make extraordinary efforts that they may come to the season of repose the sooner.

But genuine industry never wishes to be idle, finding a satisfaction in the employment as well as in the completion; therefore is ever attentive to what is feasible, and best fitting the present occasion, proceeds in it calmly, and makes effectual dispatch in every part of the progress.

3. Let us consider that we have but a certain allowance of forces given us, yet capable of some increase by good management, therefore it is our business to improve, to husband, and lay them out to the best advantage. Intemperance in sleep, in eating, and fashionable diversions woefully waste the time, enervate the strength, and create an aversion to industry, which makes it well worth our while to study what are the limits of moderation according to our constitution, and circumstances of situation, and to know precisely where intemperance begins.

Nor will it be a small benefit to cultivate a liking for whatever may be called business, and endeavour as much as possible to keep our spirits always alert, ready to perform any service that reason shall put them upon, because by these practices we shall both increase our forces and continually gain expertness to do more with the same quantity, than was possible before learning the art; for an habitual activity makes no waste, is rarely bewildered, and extricates itself presently in difficulties.

But since with the best improvement our powers will still remain confined within a narrower compass than there is work for them to do, it behoves us to be the better economists, taking care that we do not throw them away upon trivial objects, nor fatigue them by stronger efforts than the business in hand requires, nor spend them in hurry and trepidation, nor exhaust them by attempts of more than they can perform, but allow them such respite and relaxation as are proper for their recruit.

And that we may employ our stock to better profit, it will be necessary to examine the several uses we have to serve by it, distinguishing them by their several degrees of greater and less, learning to discern the exigencies

of each particular occasion, that we may never stand idle, but always find something to do most proper for the season, as knowing when to use labour of thought or labour of hand, when to deliberate or to act, when to follow business or diversion, when to put our faculties upon the stretch and when to unbend.

The knowledge of all these particulars will perhaps be thought difficult to attain, and well it may, being indeed so difficult as to render it impossible to be compassed completely; but we may daily make some proficiency, and what have we else to do in this state of imperfection and darkness, than be continually learning? for herein we manifest and exercise our diligence, one principal object of it being to improve our judgment, and the other to practise what we know. For in this respect we must always be learners, changing our measures from time to time as our skill increases, and improving in the art as well as the science of life.

The first advances in Religion are made by acquiring a seriousness of temper and avocation of the mind from all objects of sense, but when this is become habitual our cares must bend the other way to prevent its growing into a stiffness impeding us in the common offices of life, and to gain that ease heretofore spoken of, by which we may pass readily from devout to worldly employment, without mingling an unreasonable tincture of one with the other. The point to be aimed at with the giddy and thoughtless is to bring them to close attention and steadiness, to bear labour of brain and to pursue their ideas in trains without breaking the thread; but when this has been practised, the trains sometimes will continue to run longer than they should, intruding to the interruption of other employments, and defeat the purpose of recreation, which is to relieve the organs of thought by bringing those of sensation and fancy into play.

Now this relaxation of seriousness and close attention, whenever expedient, requires as much command of reason as bringing the mind into it, or keeping her to persevere therein; for the discipline of our faculties appears equally in the ready disappearance of ideas upon dismission given, as in their steady attendance till then, or quickness to come upon call.

4. There is another branch of prudence grounded upon the feebleness of our powers which directs to supply by art what we want in strength, to employ the affections and desires for assisting our industry and invigorating our activity: reason itself can do no more than give vain admonitions until it becomes an appetite, sometimes called the hunger and thirst after righteousness or rectitude: which probably may be the principal spring of movement in the mental organization, giving rise to all the rest that are to grow therein hereafter, and therefore deserves to be nurtured with all care and tenderness.

The appetites are the great stimulators of action; were it not for them the world would rust in idleness and the conveniences of it be very ill supplied: they form the rule of rectitude with most men, who generally esteem things right according as coinciding with their favourite aim or ruling passion: the politician thinks it right to do all he can for enlarging his interest, the trader to contrive all safe means of making profit, the tender girl to fly from friends and parents to Edinburgh, the India proprietor to split his stock, and the no proprietor to swear that trust is property if he can serve his friend, or advance his hopes of sharing in oriental plunder: and they give occasion to sound judgment by observation of the mischievous errors they make. We are not indeed to employ appetite in this last service, only to stand upon the watch for what benefit may be reaped from its spon-

taneous excursions; for it would be absurd to run ourselves purposely into mischiefs that we might get experience to avoid them another time, this would be doing evil that good may come of it; but we may make good use of appetite to quicken our industry and assist our resolution in executing those purposes which judgment has marked out, to overcome our averseness to trouble, our fears, vexations, pains, or uneasinesses, and to quell the turbulence of other rebellious appetites.

Therefore parents strive to cultivate an attention to the main chance in their children, displaying before them the conveniences and pleasures of easy circumstances in order to give them an appetite to their profession: nor will a man proceed well in any work, until he have a liking to the work itself, exclusive of further advantages consequential thereupon, though generated from them; and many times a pain or affliction may be stifled by some strong desire engaging the thoughts upon other objects.

Since then appetites are both so beneficial and so mischievous, and give an energy to the springs of action working either way, it behoves us to encourage such of them as are salutary, that we may have the benefit of their service when wanted, and to employ such from time to time as are most suitable to the present occasion. But among all the appetites, perhaps the most serviceable to fortify resolution is that of honour, whether springing from the good opinion of other persons or from self-approbation, together with its necessary concomitant, the abhorrence of turpitude: for this has been known to carry men through toils, and difficulties, and dangers, and self-denials, and pains, to keep up their activity throughout life it is the prime mover in the statesman and the soldier, the encourager of learning, the protector of piety, the solace of business, the director of politeness, and proves in most men some check upon the greediness of gain. Yet it not unfrequently points upon wrong objects, and in some delicate persons instead of rousing becomes the avowed patron of indolence, for they deem it unbecoming a gentleman to do anything, to take any trouble, or forbear any indulgence of fancy, through mere affectation they disdain to take care of their estate, or their family, or to put on their own clothes.

When I meet with such people, I am forced to make apologies for the pains taken in my Chapters, pretending it is only for amusement to gratify an odd humour. I durst not for the world own a thought of some little service to Religion, or morality, or reason, for that is fit only for Parsons to mind who are paid for it. But it happens to be my humour to fancy the only difference between a man of profession and a gentleman, is that one has his line of business allotted him, the other has his employment to choose, and that he ought to look upon an easy fortune as a salary given by Providence for such services as he shall judge in his discretion the best he can perform: for the man that does absolutely nothing is the most insignificant creature upon the face of the globe.

Some indulgence is necessary to appetites not rising at our own call; for we cannot live without sleep, but in composing ourselves thereto the mind has nothing else to do than surcease her activity, leaving the machine to proceed its own way: we cannot live without eating, the quantity whereof is better ascertained by appetite than by weights or measures, or any rule of judgment whose office is only to watch that a vitiated appetite does not prolong a craving, after the natural is satisfied: and in many other cases indulgence is not only allowable and innocent, but expedient, nay it is always expedient whenever innocent and allowable. For pleasure

rightly understood is the proper end of action, and good becomes so only because productive of pleasure; but scarce anything can be a recreation, diversion, or pleasure without some indulgence.

We may consider likewise that the power of reason being feeble, it would be impracticable to keep all our desires in exact order, therefore had better let the least inconvenient sometimes take their course, that we may reserve our strength to cope with the more formidable. And perhaps it may be for the health of our spiritual body that it receive impulse from the gross machine, for while lying therein like a seed in the green husk it may derive nourishment therefrom, and firmness of fibres from its action: so that we must not attempt to tear them violently asunder, but watch all opportunities of detaching one from the other gradually, as fast as shall be found practicable, lest some concretions from the drying husk should work into the inner part which might prove extremely troublesome and tormenting to us when rising to another life.

Therefore it is incumbent upon us to take all possible care, that none of our appetites, neither those of nature nor custom, nor of our own encouraging, get the mastery over us, so as to hurry us on against our Will, nor that any indulgence be given without consent and approbation of the judgment: for herein consists our real liberty, and to affect this is the proper object of true industry and application.

CHAP. XXIX.

FONDNESS FOR PLEASURES.

This fondness is the most delusive of any that beguile the human heart, because fixing always upon intense delights which vulgarly engross the name of pleasure, but are the least durable or valuable; and the most pernicious because raising the most impetuous desires, hardest to be controlled by reason, nor will even suffer it to work. I have said towards the close of the last Chapter, that pleasure is the proper end of action, and so it undoubtedly is if understood of whatever engages the mind, or throws it into a state of ease and complacence: for happiness is nothing else than the aggregate of pleasures, but then it lies in the aggregate, not in the violence of any single one.

Therefore men deceive themselves egregiously in the point of happiness, by their mistaken notion of pleasure; for esteeming nothing such that does not elevate and transport, they overlook those gently soothing engagements, which flowing in continued streams, fill the spaces that would otherwise be occupied by uneasiness, and make up the far greater part of the aggregate. The boy thinks he shall be supremely happy when he can be delivered from the discipline of a school, the labourer if he could be maintained in idleness, the lover if he can obtain his beauty, every projector and schemist if he can compass the thing he has set his heart upon; that is, he shall be exquisitely pleased; and perhaps he may be, or sometimes perhaps not, if the appetite be palled by too tedious pursuit: but how long will the pleasure last? for nothing exquisite can continue long; our organs cannot hold on their emotions beyond a certain length, but what affected them vehemently at first will soon become insipid or cloying,

and pleasure certainly takes wing, unless there be a succession of other engagements to keep her down.

But intense pleasures too much fill the thought to leave it at leisure to provide for anything else beside themselves, therefore often are very dearly bought by the mischiefs consequent upon them, or sometimes paid for beforehand by the thorns of impatience, or run the hazard of a disappointment aggravated by the eagerness they excite: and perhaps it might be found upon a fair scrutiny, that our most cruel vexations grow from the expectation of some such supreme happiness, for whenever having depended upon being vastly delighted, we are always vastly grieved on missing our aim.

A fondness for pleasure keeps us perpetually in want of it, which cannot be assuaged even by possession, for our sensations being transient and momentary, leave a craving behind for the continual repetition of them: but as high delights rarely fall in our way, when the eagerness for them has taken away the relish from all others, the greater part of our time must pass irksome and uneasy.

2. There is reason therefore to beware of this fondness as of a most dangerous enemy, and make it our principal caution to guard against its encroachments: for Pleasure is a sly enchantress, she will be perpetually displaying her allurements to our imagination to gain upon us before we are aware; the world joins in to promote her designs, inviting with their example, infecting with their sympathy, shaming with their boasts of happiness, and almost driving with their exclamations of how charming, how delightful such a thing is; so that we have need of all our eyes to keep clear of her entanglements. But she is a very Siren, attracting only to devour, for when swallowed up in delights we are as far from happiness, as those who still beat about in the boisterous seas of life: she performs nothing of all she promises, but only makes us barter away a continued satisfaction for a little present gratification, and take a sparkling bubble in lieu of a solid substance.

The luxurious find no greater gust in their dainties, than the plain man in his ordinary food; the delicate are rather moved by the loathsomeness of things coarse and inelegant, than any extraordinary joy in seeing them spruce and fine, so they follow pleasure merely as an avoidance of displeasure, aiming at no more than to escape that disgust which never falls upon the man who has not their refined taste: the rich man has been used to have his plenty and conveniences about him, so they become necessaries to him, and he receives no more joy from them than any one would feel in the supply of whatever would distress him to go without; to say he has no wants would be untrue, for though he has not the same which press upon the poor man, he has others relative to his estate, his reputation, his treatment in the world, his plans and projects which he has made necessary to his peace of mind, but which the poor man never knows.

On the other hand, toil and labour, penury and constraint, pain and affliction, grow light by use; and when habituated to the mind, leave no more uneasiness than what is incident to all stations of life; for desire rises with gratification and never ceases to grasp more, till come to a length that must end in disappointment. But the man upon whom fortune smiles, would suffer sorely by her frowns, and he to whom she has been averse would be greatly transported on finding the tables turn: this there is no doubt of, but from hence they infer that they should have been in like manner affected if they had each stood always in the other's condition.

Thus happiness depends upon opinion, men estimating one another's portion by their own sentiments without knowledge of one another's pains and pleasures, thinking those only such which would be such to themselves: but if those could be fairly weighed in the scale, I conceive the balance of both would be found much nearer an equality in all stations of life, than is commonly apprehended. The man who lives in pleasure has only a fancied advantage over the drudge in business, the path of both wears smooth and beaten by continual trading, they both jog on with like degree of ease and engagement, while attentive to their way, unless when casting an eye upon the other's track, which one thinks better and the other worse than his own. only because the passage from one to the other would respectively be so.

3. This then is the case of pleasure when it can run currently along in an habitual train, but it often raises grievous rubs in its own career, and draws on pernicious consequences. It is the greatest nourisher of indolence and indulgence, giving up the soul to every present gratification, or the prospect of them when had in expectance and ruminated upon in the fancy; thus contracting the view within the narrow compass of a fleeting moment, whereby it enfeebles resolution, banishes judgment, and throws discretion off her guard. It is the bait to draw in the young and the unexperienced, for if you can raise in them a strong fancy to anything, and feed them up with the expectation of gratifying it, you may hamper them in any toils: and so you may sometimes the experienced, if by flashing this glare in their eyes you can hinder them from taking that benefit from their experience, which they might.

What is it that fetters the amorous boy, or tender girl, for life in unequal matches, but the imagination of circling joys, perpetual transports, and supremity of happiness? what is it hurries on the voluptuous to ruin their healths, or the extravagant their fortunes; but the contempt of common enjoyments and the humour of being always prodigiously delighted? it is the irresistible joy of growing rich at once, that drives men into gaming, till they become beggars at once: and the supreme felicity of gaining a favourite point urges people furiously through toils and troubles, expenses, vexations, dangers, and mischiefs of every kind.

The charms of riot and debauchery make highwaymen and housebreakers, and establish that antiprudential maxim received as fundamental among them, A short life and a merry one; or if they are driven by necessity, it is a necessity created by their aversion to labour, as being unpleasant and therefore intolerable. The allurements of fancy prove the first source of wantonness, of unlucky and mischievous tricks in the earliest years, and in the riper often produce more troublesome effects; for a flow of prosperity with continual indulgence of the desires, commonly makes men capricious, selfish, narrow-minded, untractable, contemptuous, and overbearing, until some galling disappointment or misfortune has taught them, that there are other objects necessary to be thought of besides that of pleasing themselves.

The School-boy will not mind his lesson while hankering after his plays, nor can the trader thrive whose thoughts are perpetually running upon diversions and elegancies; neither will a man in any line of life ever be good for anything, until he can banish all imagination of pleasure out of his head for hours together.

Even in Religion it is the joy of being unparalleled saints, overtopping mankind in holiness, that makes people censorious, rigid, and superstitious: the notion of exquisite delights, high transports, and raptures, that betrays them into superstition and enthusiasm. most commonly followed by dejec-

tions and despondences, upon which they are ready to pronounce God unfaithful, in not gratifying them so highly as they had promised themselves. Hence appears how indispensable an obligation we lie under upon all accounts, to learn an indifference to pleasures, because, when violently attached to them, they will lead us into dangers and inconveniences of every kind.

4. Perhaps I shall be thought attempting to perplex mankind or involving them in contradictions by inveighing so severely against pleasure, which nevertheless I have acknowledged the proper end of action: wherefore it is incumbent upon me to find a clue for extricating us from this labyrinth: and this I conceive may be had by observation of what pleasures excite a fondness for them in our hearts, and are apt to possess our imagination to the exclusion of all other objects; for those only are the Sirens, a principal part of whose malignancy lies in their enticing away from others that are innocent and valuable.

For pleasure rightly understood is the true ultimate point wherein all our lines of conduct ought to centre: whatever we do for the service of religion terminates in the unspeakable happiness of another life; what we do for mankind, for the public, for our friends or our neighbours, tends to the increase of happiness or diminution of evil among them, or to some good or convenience from whence they may reap a benefit; and so far as is consistent with the other two it is a duty we owe ourselves to make our lives in every part of them as pleasurable as we can, with our best industry and contrivance, only remembering to contrive for every part, not for one small portion of our span in neglect of all the rest.

But one may pursue an end by a steady determinate perseverance without an eager fondness, which might blind our eyes so as not to discern the whole length of our way, or make them see double, and fix upon a false Sun instead of the true, whose clear beams would show us that the right road lies where there are the most pleasures to be had, not where there are the sweetest. For these captivate the heart, make themselves necessary to us, so that we cannot do without them, but feel an uneasy want whenever they are not to be had, which no other pleasure can assuage, because having lost their relish.

Therefore the true art of pleasure lies in bringing the mind to take it in as many things as we can, more careful to be always pleased than highly pleased, to have many desires but no wants; for then we shall be indifferent to all our pleasures, but tasteless to none. Want always indicates a penury of mind, when it has but one solace to depend upon, and if that fails must be undone: whereas he that has plenty of objects to engage him need never suffer by the absence of any one. Hence it becomes a matter of prudence to keep desire upon attainable objects, choosing such as will satisfy rather than such as will delight; for satisfying pleasures will easier give place to the next that follow after them, and so the succession goes on smoothly without rub or interruption.

Not but that the higher pleasures have their use, as I shall show presently, but in admitting them to our desire, care ought to be taken that they do not endanger the more gently soothing, which make up the greater part of our happiness, and therefore deserve to be chiefly regarded. The principal stream of pleasure flows from the exercise of our faculties either of body or mind, in the pursuit of some engaging end, for which reason hope is more valuable than fruition, because hope makes the pursuit engaging, which the other puts an end to, unless it can open new aims to engage our activity

afresh. We shall fare best by keeping attentive to practise the means and provide the materials of pleasure, leaving the fruits to drop spontaneously without stretching to gather them; for pleasure will not be forced either by artifices to strain appetite, or by dwelling upon it in the imagination, or by taking pains to persuade ourselves how much we are pleased; it is always most genuine when springing naturally from the object without efforts to cast it up.

All men agree, though few remember, that hunger is the best sauce; he then receives most pleasure from that appetite who keeps his body in health, and his organs in tone by exercise and temperance, who never thinks of victuals until he sees them, and forgets them again as soon as the repast is over; for he finds a constant relish in that which nature, or the custom of those among whom he consorts, have made his ordinary food, which relish he would infallibly lose by a little practice of indulgence in high sauces or excess, without getting anything better in exchange.

The like reason gives the preference to a desire of excellence above that of excelling, because it holds the activity constantly employed in such improvement as can be made, and will afford satisfaction enough as well in the pursuit, as in every little acquisition obtained, which flows purest when coming unsought, and no longer thought of than felt: for the serious contemplation of what we have done or what we have gotten, is a species of indulgence which ought to be very sparingly allowed as a matter of recreation. And if there be a real joy in excelling (as in this world of vanity where all things are estimated by comparison who can avoid doing so?) there is no occasion to let it grow into an object of desire, because that of excellence will answer the same purpose more effectually; for the more diligent we are in making improvement, we shall find ourselves the seldomer outdone, and meet oftener with our inferiors.

But this pleasure, such as it is, ought to be no more than what strikes unavoidably from the objects before us, for if ruminated upon, or endeavours be used to enhance it, there is imminent danger it will lead into the gloominess of pride, the follies of vanity, the delusions of self-conceit, the restlessness of ambition, and the torments of envy, or perhaps the despondency of being undeservedly treated by Providence.

Even in religion, how fondly soever some folks may affect to talk of transports and ecstasies, yet I conceive the present reward of it lies chiefly in that gently pleasing consciousness of well-doing, which accompanies the exercises of it. I do not deny that when having acquitted ourselves well upon some opportunity offered of doing an important service, or in seasons of contemplation when the flood of grace rises strongly upon us, there may be pleasures in a degree to be called exquisite; but these happen very rarely, for they are angels' food, and we can expect no more than now and then to have a little foretaste of the heavenly manna: therefore we are not to make them objects of our desire nor aims of our pursuit, but take them as they come without straining our faculties to prolong their duration, or swell up their tides higher than they will spring of themselves: for there are voluptuaries in devotion as well as in eating, and both lose more pleasures than they gain by their endeavours to render them excessive.

But the greatest absurdity of all lies in making it a duty to be transported; for nothing is more incompatible with pleasure than duty, nor can the performance of it ever be pleasing until what was matter of obligation becomes an object of choice upon prospect of a desirable advantage pursued

thereby, which will create a hunger and thirst whose gratifications are similar to those of natural appetite.

The principal benefit of religion with respect to a pleasurable life, is that it supplies us with continual engagement, for so far as we can trace our references home we shall always find something to be done in the service of God, or of our fellow-creatures, or of ourselves, attended with that unsought consciousness of acting rightly, which never cloys: and it is likewise an infallible test to distinguish the siren pleasures from the innocent, for those that are fond, or vicious, or inordinate will never bear the reference to our ultimate intention.

5. Nevertheless, pleasures, as I hinted just now, have their uses; for they together with fears first teach us activity, and are much the better mistresses of the two. Therefore Nature in our infancy gives a quickness to our organs which makes them capable of striking strong sensations, and finding a delight in almost every exercise that is not put upon them by constraint: if it were not for this, children would never awake out of that drowsy stupidity which overwhelms them for the most part in their cradles; when they can run about, you see them incessantly busy in their little plays which keep their limbs or their imagination in movement during those long intervals of time, wherein hunger and thirst cannot find them employment; as they grow up they begin to have a forecast for pleasures a little remote, this gives an engagement to the prosecution of an object not immediately within their reach, and they can be pleased with taking the right measures for procuring something that will please them by and by, from whence afterwards by long process grows the idea of rectitude, and the satisfaction felt in the steps taken towards an ultimate aim.

And in our riper years there must generally be the expectation of something apprehended very delightful to make us enter upon business, or undertake any long work: no matter whether the delight prove so great as apprehended, for here again happiness depends upon opinion; but the opinion is necessary to engage us in the work, and procure us the satisfaction found in the engaging pursuit. Thus are we often cheated into a real good by the lure of an imaginary, like the old man's lazy sons in the fable, who were set a digging to their great profit in the improvement of the vineyard by being told of a hidden treasure. Or if the pleasure expected be real, still it is less in quantity than that distilling in the progress towards it; for I believe My Lord Mayor's coach has been the remote occasion of more engaging satisfaction to the apprentice, than ever his Lordship felt in it himself.

Pleasures serve to recreate and unbend the mind, and when properly interspersed lighten the burden of any laborious work: they give a briskness to the spirits, a cheerfulness to the temper, contribute to preserve the health by quickening and smoothing the circulations, and unite people together in intimacy; for nothing makes friendship more hearty than a participation of pleasures, unless it be a fellowship in distresses, which is a much less desirable cement: they make us take a fuller notice of the places we have been at, the objects we have seen, and the transactions we have borne a part in; and often store up a fund of entertainment for the imagination in the remembrance of them after they are past, insomuch that Epicurus placed the happiness of his wise-man, when under the frowns of fortune in the recollection of former enjoyments. But I differ from him upon that point, as expecting the benefit rather from a spontaneous reflection, or one that rises easily, than from a forced recollection; for I would have nothing

forced in matters of pleasure, and conceive that herein lies the great error of your men of pleasure, who turn it into a toil, and spoil its relish by their great pains to enhance it.

Instruction sinks deepest when conveyed in amusing tales, or the manner of receiving it can be made an entertainment: the flowers of rhetoric when aptly fitted on, like the feathers to an arrow, give force to the steely points of argumentation: elegance of language, harmony of composition, method, allegory, allusion, familiar example, whatever helps to illustrate or draw up the colours of things, at once pleases and informs; for it is the property of light to entertain the eye while it discovers the object: the pleasures of conversation make one among the principal links of society, multiply the intercourses among mankind, and help transactions of business to go on the easier.

Nor is pleasure incapable of finding an entrance even into the holy offices of Religion, as witness the trumpets, the choristers, the perfumes, the golden vessels, the rich vestments, the splendour and magnificence of the Jewish temple, the love feasts of the primitive Christians, the organ in our Churches, and chanting in our Cathedral service.

But it is not at the altar alone that pleasure may be turned to the service of Religion and Philosophy, by assisting to work that largeness of heart which renders it their fittest receptacle: pain and uneasiness necessarily contract the views; while under them it is scarce practicable for a man to think of any thing beyond himself, and his present grievance; but a little enjoyment of innocent pleasures setting the mind at ease within itself, opens his prospect: he then can take concern with things around him, diffuse in sincere charity to his fellow-creatures, comprehend the general interest, and pour forth in hearty thanksgiving for that flood of bounty which, like the vital air, expands every where except in some few dungeons and loathsome places, and whereof he now feels the influence.

Thus we see the value of pleasures does not lie in themselves, but in their uses; and many times the joy of having gained our point is nothing, but the whole delight stands confined to the pursuit: we matter not the shilling we play for at cards, yet if we played for nothing there would be no diversion in the game; so in the games of traffic, of ambition, of accomplishment, the wealth, the honour, the perfection, when gained, will not invest us with the supreme happiness we flatter ourselves, yet without such expectation we should not pass our time so agreeably as we do in managing our cards well, and making advances towards them.

This might teach us the true science of pleasure, which consists in distinguishing those that are most productive of engagement, of activity, of agreeable reflection, of cheerfulness, and serenity of mind, or stimulate to useful acquisitions, and prefer those before the more exquisite. But science will avail nothing without a strength of resolution to practise it, which may enable us to choose for ourselves among our pleasures, and to choose with discretion, not with fondness, nor ever suffer them to force themselves upon us whether we will or no, to harbour no wants nor anxious cravings for them: for this is what was meant by the Apathy of the Philosophers, this is that forbearance which is one of the two branches of our Redemption, and this stands included in what was styled in Scripture language, asserting the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

6. This selection of pleasures, valuable for their fruits and appendages from those which delight only in the fruition, most obviously marks the difference between a civilized and a barbarous people; for the pleasures of

pure nature, the gratifications of undisciplined appetite, are as intense, or perhaps more so, than those of refinement.

When a child, I have been more highly delighted with a coloured print bought for a halfpenny, with a ballad tune sung by the coarse-piped chamber maid, in reading the dragon of Wantley, in discovering a better way of building houses with cards, than ever I was since with the finest paintings, the sweetest music, the sublimest poetry, or the luckiest thought occurring in the progress of my Chapters: even the heights of Philosophy and effusions of grace, if you regard only the present moment, are not more transporting than the amusements of childhood. Nor do I doubt that the American savages find as strong relish in their lumps of flesh with the skin on, taken from the burning coals, in their contrivances to catch the beavers, in successes against their enemies and seizures of plunder, as we do in our dainties, our elegancies, our arts, and accomplishments. And after all, perhaps we have no greater enjoyments among us than those of eating when we are hungry, drinking when we are thirsty, laying down when sleepy, or as the second Solomon has pronounced, than scratching where it itches.

But arts and sciences and the civilized modes of employment add to the enjoyment of life not by heightening the gust of it, but by supplying more in quantity with a less interrupted continuity: we must indeed have an imagination of something very delightful in the possession of them to engage us to the pursuit; but this notion had better gradually subside, as indeed it generally does, in proportion as the pursuit becomes habitual and pleasant. But the benefit results from the pursuit itself, which finds employment for our time by supplying us continually with engaging aims in the steps taken towards attainment of our purpose, and yields a fund of agreeable reflection on the advances we have made, which is compatible with our other reasonable desires, which provides for the entertainment of other persons besides our own, and takes us off from the indulgence of those natural appetites, that would be troublesome to others and pernicious to ourselves.

For we may observe, that the arts of pleasure have their foundation in the resistance of pleasure, we must get rid of our gross tastes to acquire a refined; the first effect of manly desires is to give us a contempt for those childish ones which used to afford us vast delight before, and in all accomplishment there is something of a subjection of appetite. Politeness cannot subsist without an easy, unruffled temper, capable of stifling all emotions that rise in the breast; the genteelest players at games of diversion are those who show the least eagerness, who can win without transport or lose without concern; and in all arts the ignorant are known from connoisseurs by that rapturous amazement with which they are struck upon beholding extraordinary performances.

Thus the arts providing for the embellishment of life were not designed to make us more fond of pleasure, but to bring that propensity which there is in most men thereto into a regular system whereby to prevent it from running out into extravagant and dangerous excursions: for it is better to persuade a man to study any science whatever, than that he should act wantonly without any science at all; and there being such an infinite variety of dispositions among mankind, makes it necessary to provide employment for the industry and ingenuity of them all; besides that industry of any one kind helps to encourage that in every other, as well by increasing the demands for its produce, and so promoting commerce, as by rendering the

spirit of activity and contrivance more general: therefore we find that in proportion as countries grow better policied, the polite arts go hand in hand with the useful, or at least do not wait long for their introduction after the others have been established. For they contribute a share for the benefit of society, making it the business of some to prepare materials for the entertainment of others; and if it is said they give occasion to vices unknown among the ignorant, this may be true without their increasing the growth of wickedness, but only by turning it into a different channel: for there is a perversity of character to be found among all families upon earth, which will find matter to work upon, wherever placed. The same persons whom we see rapacious, over-reaching, and tricking here, would have been pilferers, robbers, and plunderers if born among savages; those who riot in luxury among us would have been likely to wallow in sensualities among them; for the same error leads into both, namely, their fondness for high delights, and inability to resist the impulse of any allurement striking strongly upo their fancy.

CHAP. XXX.

SELF-DENIAL.

The greatest conquest, say all the Sages of ancient and modern days, is that of ourselves; for victory is never so glorious nor so valuable as when gained over an invader or a tyrant, who would enslave us: but there is not a more imperious or oppressive tyrant in nature, than that usually called Self-love; though his true name be Self-fondness, the most opposite to love and the most dangerous to its interests, because assuming its likeness and thereby beguiling the unwary to court their own thraldom.

Liberty is dear to all, but the ideas of it are very different, nor perhaps are there many terms current in language which are so little understood: men commonly place it in a license to do uncontrolledly whatever their desires or the present impulse of passion shall prompt them to; but the liberty of the sons of God consists in an exemption from passion and a superiority to desire, so as they may be able to choose and to act as they will, upon all occasions, being passive in none of their motions, nor hurried along impetuously by any force whatsoever.

Now the two great obstacles against this freedom are Pleasure and Pain, which the imbecility of human nature in its present degraded state renders it unable to resist; nor shall we ever become freemen until having attained that perfect power of endurance and forbearance, which is to be our deliverance from original sin and the completing of our Redemption. This is a great work never to be finished in this life, wherein yet we must make what progress we are able, or else shall go out utterly unprepared to carry it on in the next.

Therefore it behoves us to be diligent in loosening the bonds that hold us, which is done two ways, either by weakening the force of our desires, or strengthening our own resolution: the former is the more generally feasible, for we may starve desire by keeping prudently out of the way of temptation, or finding other amusements to engage us from it; but the latter is the more desirable, as comprehending the other within it, for every throwing of the adversary lessens his vigour while it adds to our own, and it is always esteemed more advantageous to beat an enemey in open field where

it can be done, than to elude his grasp by stratagems or countermarches. But to qualify us for the day of battle it will be necessary to prepare beforehand by discipline and exercises, and frequent skirmishes with such parties as we can master, whereby to acquire experience and hardiness to cope with the more formidable.

He then who is duly sensible of his natural weakness will endeavour to mend it by seasonable self-denials, refusing himself innocent pleasures that they may not get him within the sphere of their attraction, nor become necessary to him, and undergoing some fatigues and troubles not immediately needful, that he may not be afraid of them when expedient; that he may have the entire command of his own actions, and be able to take up or lay down his affections and aversions with the same ease as he could sit down to a game at cards with pleasure, or let it alone without hankering, or as he could go out in a rainy day, if there were occasion, with tranquillity, or comfort himself with the thoughts of having a dry house over his head.

2. But there are grievous mistakes made upon this article of self-denial for want of bearing in mind the use and intention of it, which is none other than to preserve our independency against all attempts of desire, or fear to bring us into subjection under them. Some esteem it a thing good in itself, an acceptable offering to God, when they sacrifice all their enjoyment and their ease to please him, therefore the more they afflict themselves by abstinences and austerities, the richer their holocaust will be.

But God desires no such sacrifice, nor is he pleased with the sufferings of his creatures. He gave us our existence that we might be capable of enjoyment, he has spread innumerable blessings around us upon the earth, that we might be happy in the right use of them; and we serve him best when we take the most effectual methods to secure happiness for ourselves together with our fellow-creatures, for which purpose, as I have shown before, all our religious duties and services are calculated He has made satisfaction the first and constant mover of our actions, he has rendered pain and uneasiness abhorrent to our nature, nor should we ever have inducement to stir a finger, if we could once become totally indifferent to both: but as a man in trade must exhaust his coffers to buy merchandizes, by the profit whereof he may replenish them the fuller, so it often happens that our sole avenue to pleasure lies through pain, in which case it is prudent to disburse our hoards of ease and enjoyment for the sake of a larger return, so that we pursue pleasure even while running voluntarily into troubles.

Therefore the prospect of some addition to our happiness is the only justifiable ground of self-denial, nor, as I have said formerly, would I have a man ever deny himself anything, unless in order to please himself better thereby another time: not that I expect he should always clearly discern that consequence, for the arts of moral prudence respecting remote advantages are not traceable by everybody, nor completely by anybody, therefore he must take guidance from the rules established upon the experience of others, who have hung them out as marks for the direction of such as are unacquainted with the road. But whoever first laid down the rules ought to have discerned the benefits resulting naturally from them, or he acts deceitfully, and he that follows them proceeds upon a confidence of their having been so laid down: for if he has not a discernment of his own of the benefit to accrue, nor the sanction of a rule, or thinks to refine upon his teachers by exceeding the austerities prescribed without a clear view of their expedience, he acts foolishly and inconsiderately, if not wickedly. And the affliction of ourselves is so far from being a necessary ingredient

in self-denials, that we ought to make our principal aim to admit as little of it as possible in the exercises of them; for the cheerfuller and easier we can go through the task, the softer we can make the burden lie upon our shoulders, the more manfully we can perform our exercises, so much the better, and so much the more acceptable in the sight of Heaven, as being a completer conquest over the enemy, and a greater improvement of our own strength, which will enable us to pursue our advantages for the future without trouble from those allurements and terrors that used to prove an obstacle before.

For the only purpose of self-denial is for inuring us to do the same things we did under it, without any reluctance or self-denial at all; and the sooner we acquire this habit the less we shall suffer in the learning, and the more effectually we shall answer our purpose. Therefore it is advisable to take our eye off as much as possible from the greatness of the difficulties we undertake, and fix it upon the advantages we promise ourselves therefrom, or upon the consciousness of rectitude, which is a certain evidence of advantages we do not see: and when by this means we have in time brought the difficulty to be none, it will both encourage and prepare us to surmount greater difficulties in like manner.

3. Nevertheless, it behoves us to use conduct as well as courage, and manage prudently as well in respect to the time of making our attacks, the quarters where they may be practicable, as the choice of such adversaries as prove our greatest annoyance, and to make a timely retreat whenever overmatched: for our natural debility is such, that we have need of all our circumspection and contrivance to do any good with it.

There are people who never think of discipline while things go on smoothly and currently, but when some affliction or pain falls upon them, or lowness of spirits oppresses them, then they will needs resolve upon great achievements, when having enough to do to support the present pressure they lie under. This is ill timing of things, it is whetting the sword when the enemy draws close upon them. But the seasons of prosperity are the proper seasons for self-denial, when the spirits are strong, the forces fresh, and the mind at ease to look about and contrive; for then the Siren enemies are busiest about us, then are we best able to cope with them, and then is the time to lay in a stock of patience and hardiness, which we may find the benefit of in time of trial, whether upon some grievance befalling or some arduous service requiring our dispatch.

Others there are, who can be satisfied with nothing less than heroism in self-denial; they must be Alexanders to carry the world before them, or Herculeses to subdue all monsters. Those are commonly people who proceed upon the motive of fear and obligation: they must wage perpetual war against all the enemies of God, or they will incur his wrath and be delivered over to the devil.

It is indeed our duty to subdue all enemies we can, but the addition of We can will make large deductions from the particle All; and there is no duty in attacking those we cannot overcome, nor will the devil lay hold of us for the omission. We are to wage perpetual war, but our welfare consists more in vigilance to take all advantages, than in bravery to challenge every foe, and even when we do exert our vigour it must be guided and tempered by discretion. When men drive furiously on with a resolution to storm Heaven at once by violence, they become righteous overmuch, that is, erroneously so; they would make clear work as they go along, cutting

up every desire, root and branch, eradicating every sensibility of pain, or terror, or uneasiness.

But our desires and our aversions are necessary to us, for without them we could have no choice of action: the business is to prevent their getting head so far as to impose a choice upon us, that we may be always free to choose for ourselves; but we can choose no otherwise than upon the judgment of what is most desirable, or clearest of consequences to which we are averse: neither should we know wherein to serve our neighbour, if we could meet with one who had neither desire to gratify, nor fear to be delivered from.

But it often happens that such as will needs be righteous overmuch, fail of being righteous enough: for while eager on their austerities, abstinences, and arduous enterprizes, the enemy comes behind and trips them up, so as to disable them from acquitting the common offices of life, or perhaps their very eagerness turns into a passion, which requires a particular self-denial to master it. But a wise general will take good care of his own territory before he thinks of making inroads, and leave no little strong hold untaken behind him, while marching inconsiderately into the heart of the enemies' country.

Therefore it behoves us to become perfect in common goodness, before we aim at extraordinary: to take care there be no unnatural cravings in eating and drinking, for dainties, elegancies, or curiosities, no indulgence of the pillow, aversion to trouble, impatience under pain, cross accident, or disappointment, listlessness or dilatoriness in business, vexation at being put out of our way, proneness to murmur, to despond, to censure, to despise, to draw comparisons, no unevenness of temper, nor other such evil habits which are frequently contracted unwarily by giving too close an attention to feats of extraordinary prowess.

Since then we have not eyes to look everywhere, nor forces to act offensively against all enemies at once, it becomes us to level our batteries against those that give the greatest annoyance, to discover the sins that do so easily beset us, to consider our station in life, our particular duties, the works we have to do, and apply our self-denial to the best advantage for removing those obstacles, which used to retard us in the performance of them. If without neglect of this service we can acquire higher degrees of endurance and forbearance, qualifying us to perform extraordinary services, it is a glorious achievement; but we shall do right to be cautious in struggling with a potent adversary, for when we find him too much for us it will be prudent to retire in time, because by persisting obstinately to strive against an insurmountable difficulty, we only exhaust our strength and leave ourselves defenceless against the first assailant that shall afterwards attack us.

And before we bestir ourselves much to gain extraordinary powers, it will be worth while to consider what good we could do with them if we had them: for if they would lie useless in our hands, it can be but labour lost to take pains in the acquisition. How would the man of fortune be more serviceable if he could bear the burthens of the porter, or endure his coarseness of diet and nastiness of living? We who are happily placed in a country of liberty where Religion has the protection of laws, what could we do more for its interests if we were able to suffer martyrdom, to sacrifice houses, possessions, wives, children, ease, and life, for the faith? I do not deny that those are valuable and desirable qualities, if they were to be had with a wish; but how is it our duty to toil and struggle for them while we

have other work enough upon our hands? For in all our motions we are to regard the call of Heaven signified by the talents and opportunities afforded us, and the ways wherein our industry may prove effective to some beneficial purpose, and to practise such discipline or other methods as will better qualify us to obey the call.

We are taught to pray, Lead us not into temptation, which would be superfluous if it were expected from us to become capable of resisting all temptation: therefore we need not be disturbed at wanting the firmness sufficient to carry us through all kinds of labours, troubles, distresses, and sufferings whereof we have heard or seen examples. For though a prudent general will leave nothing to chance that he can help, yet for all his prudence a great deal will still remain in the power of chance; nor can we expect, like the arrogant Stoics, ever to make ourselves secure against being hurt by the malice of fortune, for this would raise us to a state of independency: but this will not deject us when we reflect whose disposal fortune lies under.

For we may contemplate all the burdens, hard services, and evils incident to human life without terror, and enter upon any of them, when called thereto, with courage, as confiding in the goodness of God, that he will not lead us into temptation above what we are able to bear, or will with the temptation also make a way to escape, whereby if we are not now, we may become able to bear it.

4. The proper end of self-denial is ease and enlargement of power, to bring our desires and aversions under such discipline, as that they may never obstruct nor trouble us in the prosecution of our truest interests and enjoyments: therefore those are mischievous and blameable austerities that weaken our natural powers and appetites, which are the instruments given us whereby to help ourselves upon all occasions. He that fasts till he has destroyed the tone of his stomach, till he has emaciated himself or brought a feebleness upon his muscles and a poverty into his blood, has very ill bestowed his pains: for what avails it to remove obstacles to your work if you likewise remove away all the ability you had to perform any? He who shuts himself up from all enjoyments of the world until he has lost all knowledge in the ways of the world, only makes himself a less useful member of society, than those who drive along in the torrent of impulse with the common run of mankind.

For as I have remarked in a foregoing chapter, some indulgence is necessary to support the health, to recreate the spirits, to save the strength for great occasions, to give a briskness and cheerfulness to our motions, to leave us at leisure for learning and observation of what passes around, and for receiving the influence of sympathy by which the benefits of society are principally conveyed.

It is a very nice point to know exactly how far to indulge, and when to deny, and therefore deserves the more diligent study: but what have we else to do than live and learn? nor is there a more profitable science to be studied than the right timing and proper application of our resolution. For as with respect to the company or the world about us, compliance is a virtue, but passiveness a fatal error, so it is in our transactions at home among our own desires: we must suffer them to lead, but never to drive us, nor even to lead, unless when we suffer it, keeping the reins always in our hand, though we do not always use them, and having our eyes constantly open that we may see the way before us, so as to know upon all occa-

sions why we give way, and why we restrain: for this is that common sense which is more valuable than fine sense, that discretion which steers equally clear from the follies of impulse, and the extravagances of rigid philosophy or righteousness overmuch.

Excess of self-denial often springs from a fund of laziness lurking at bottom; men think to master all their passions by a violent exertion at once, that they may have nothing left to do afterwards: and sometimes, as already noticed in the last section, self-denial itself by growing eager will corrupt into a passion. In this case it becomes an enemy as much as any other passion it has subdued, and as much requires another self-denial to bring it down, by resisting its impulses that it may not run away with us.

For if we cannot break off our labours and our austerities upon occasion without vexing and hankering after them, we are not freemen, but have let this excellent servant encroach upon us till he is become our master: therefore it is expedient to keep him within his duty by purposed interruptions, and a ready compliance with avocations of business, or amusement that any body shall throw in our way; for without some such cartion we may run a great hazard of growing righteous overmuch.

So that it is a vain imagination to think of doing our business by a strong exertion once for all; but the desire of having no further need of self-denial is perhaps the propensity most expedient for us to subdue; for this life is a school and a warfare, wherein we must always be exercising, always improving, and always contesting; our greatest ease must spring from the expectation beforehand of never being at rest, and like the Spartans, inuring our mind to a military state, keeping a constant look out, and standing in readiness to march, to countermarch, and change our measures alertly, as occasion shall require. But it is not easy at all times to see where the enemy lurks, for the passions often urge to very rigorous denials of one another, in which case we may be strengthening impulse by the very exercises with which we think to subdue it.

Ambition will drive through toils and struggles, abstinences of all kinds, patience of pains, fatigues, contradictions, and indignities; the passion of being admired has made some girls almost starve themselves for a shape, and do more than popish penance in stays uneasier than a hair shirt, nor is there any favourite scheme men have strongly at heart, which may not enable them to do and suffer great things for accomplishing it: all this while they fancy themselves miracles of patience and resolution, but are indeed driven like a nail with a hammer, by the force of one passion, surmounting the resistance of another. It may be good policy to employ those champions to bring down a stubborn foe, too strong for our sober reason to deal with, but they will conquer for themselves, not for us, unless we keep them disciplined from time to time by seasonable self-denials of the passions they instigate in us.

5. There is a discipline which Providence exercises upon us in the pains, afflictions, disappointments and other trials interspersed among mankind, of which we may make good profit by striving against the desires that are particularly hurt by them. They are not indeed self-denials because not voluntarily undertaken, but we may turn them to the same use, and they were sent with design to be so turned.

This reflection, while a man can hold it lively in his imagination, might encourage him to strive for his present ease and future profit by endeavouring to lessen his aversion to the pressure laid upon him: he will scarce be able to do this completely, nor need he think amiss of himself that he cannot,

for human infirmity is not a fault; but the persuasion of such a power being a desirable thing, if it could be acquired, will help little by little to a consent and acquiescence of the mind in his burdens without any want of a riddance from them.

But where there is no want there is no imbecility; you may hold your hand near a roasting fire so long as you can keep from wanting to get rid of the burning heat, though you feel the smart you do not suffer by it, nor are forced to snatch your hand away. This is called patience, and answers the same purpose as self-denial, by weakening those aversions which stand in our way against the prosecution of advantageous schemes. Nevertheless, the exemption from want does not necessarily banish desire, for we may desire a thing without wanting it: neither need the fullest consent of the mind to burdens we cannot help, withhold us from effecting our deliverance as soon as we can; for as I have said in a former place, we are to kiss the rod of affliction, not to court it.

Enjoyment is our proper goal, nor are we ever to take the miry road of pain and trouble voluntarily, unless upon a reasonable prospect of its leading thereto; when God calls to trials we may depend they are for our benefit, but the moment he opens a way to escape the call ceases, nor shall we ever serve either him or ourselves by running into them needlessly.

CHAP. XXXI.

HABITS.

It may be remembered that I made a triple division of the human compound into Body, Mental Organization, and Perceptive Spirit. The last, which alone is properly ourselves, the other two having only a borrowed personality while in vital union therewith, can receive no alteration either in form or quality, but must continue forever the same, unless it should please God by an immediate act of his Omnipotence to re-create it in another nature: for every alteration proceeds from a different disposition of parts, or accession of new parts, or subtraction of old, none of which can happen to the Spirit, as being an individual having no parts, nor capable of admitting any: it can only change its condition by having a different set of organs whereby to perceive, and of instruments wherewith to act. But the other two being material compositions, may admit of alteration, and it behoves us, so far as in our power lies, to work such as may prove an amendment of them in form and quality: more especially the second part in the division which is our more inseparable companion, and to share in our personality for a long, long continuance, after we shall have taken final leave of the other.

But how shall we go to work for managing either of them? we cannot come at them by manual operation, nor take their springs to pieces, as one might the works of a clock, in order to file, or straighten, or clean, or rectify them in any respect. The bodily movements we may help a little by diet, medicine, and exercise, but none of these methods will touch the spiritual body, nor even the finer circulations of the carnal, wherein its passions, inclinations, aversions, imaginations, combinations, trains of ideas, and all the mechanical impulses depend. Yet these are the subjects we are to work upon, the engines we have to employ, as well for securing ourselves and our fellow-travellers an agreeable passage along this present stage of

our journey, as providing a good constitution for the inner body wherewith it may rise to health, and vigour, and happiness, in the next.

But we can scarce have profited so little by experience as to fail of observing, that ideas rise whether in clusters together, or successively in the same order wherein they have been frequently introduced; the animal spirits which cast them up circulating more readily, like the grosser fluids, in those channels which have been worn smooth by continual passage.

From hence proceed our habits both of acting and thinking, for both depend upon the same cause, to wit, the spontaneous or mechanical rising of ideas in thought; for our actions constantly follow the apprehensions and motions occurring from time to time, which though they may be sometimes called up by the understanding, yet arise for the most part from our customary trains of thinking: or if judgment does direct to an end, the steps to be taken in prosecution of it must be suggested by habit, or the business will not go on readily and currently.

This is particularly evident in foreign languages, which how thoroughly soever a man may be skilled in, he will not be able to talk without much practice, whereas in our vulgar tongue, if the subject does not require thought, there wants none to run on fluently with a torrent of words by the hour together, and sometimes people will blurt out things inadvertently, which if judgment had been awake it would have suppressed.

All our arts and ways of acting, the management of our limbs, and expertness of every kind, derives from habit, nor can science proceed without a peculiar art in marshalling the thoughts: the turns of genius too and acquired tastes were taken, I conceive, from some habitual bias the young imagination had fallen into entirely, for else, were they the sole gift of nature, why should they be so various among mankind, but so generally similar in particular times and countries; but all habits must have a beginning, being generated by single acts either of external objects, or example and sympathy, or of our own industry, and may be lost again by disuse, occasioned either by discontinuance of the like causes, or their working out different channels.

Since then habits are of so great efficacy to determine the colour of our lives, and the last-mentioned only of the three causes producing them lies within our power, but the other two no further than as we may use that to put ourselves within their influence or to avoid it, we shall do wisely to apply our best skill and diligence for encouraging or contracting such of them as may be salutary, and escaping or breaking such as are pernicious.

2. But the principal habit best deserving our cultivation is that of industry itself, which, as already shown, does not lie so much in a continual laborious application, as in a calm, steady vigilance to act always with consciousness or advertency as well in matters of small as greater moment, and with a consent of the judgment, whether passed deliberately or intuitively, according to the exigency of the occasion: if this cannot be done without strenuous attention it indicates a deficiency of habit, for things we are well habituated to we do easily, with no strain upon the mind to hold it attentive.

Perhaps it will be said that such habit is not to be perfectly learned; I know it is not, therefore would not have it imposed as an indispensable task, for I am for making as little use of obligation as possible, because in difficult cases it oftener disheartens than stimulates: but if the benefits of such habit were contemplated, the desire of obtaining them, drawing men to take all opportunities of advancing, they might daily make some pro-

gress in it; and moderate efforts continually repeated will suffice to work a habit much better than violent exertions which can be made only now and then.

This confirms what I have urged before concerning the imprudence of being righteous overmuch, which would attempt to live in fervours of devotion, or to shape the whole conduct by the highest rules of abstracted rectitude; for such strenuous exertions exhaust the spirits, and in the intervals, while they are exhausted, things must be done inadvertently; wherefore an attention to the lights flowing almost spontaneously from the rules of common prudence or propriety in the ordinary transactions and intercourses of the world, is necessary to perfect the habit of acting advertently, which we had begun in our serious exercises: for it is the more important of the two to bring the conduct to follow steadily the judgment occurring, than to have the judgment itself exactly informed.

The residence of this habit seems to be in the spiritual body, wherefore the acquisition of it is the best improvement we can make therein: not that I suppose any of our habits, our appetites, our expertness, or stores of knowledge shall remain with us after our dissolution; for since the objects we shall have to converse with, and functions we shall have to perform are likely to be totally different from the present, the retention of our old ideas or ways would make them extremely troublesome, and render everything strange. For novelty is different from strangeness, one is engaging, the other unpleasant, but new objects are made strange only by some discordance with old trains. When children are first born everything must be new to them but nothing strange, until they become familiar with nurse and mamma, and then they take violent distaste at strange faces.

But use and habit are well known to strengthen the powers employed in them, nor do they fail to work alterations even in the structure of our bodily frame: why else do our right arms grow stronger, and the pulses in them more vigorous than the left? Why is the flesh of the laborious firmer, and their muscles better knit, than of the dissolute and effeminate, unless by the efficacy of exercise to draw them into a closer contexture? A man that had learned to dance, or been much practised in other exercises of activity, though by drinking the waters of Lethe he should utterly lose all his skill and expertness, would nevertheless retain his strength of limbs and suppleness of joints, and be able to learn the same again, or other feats of dexterity, much quicker than one who had spent his time in lumpish indolence. So the faculties of the spiritual body, though to be employed in learning arts entirely new, yet will be better qualified in robustness and agility to make proficiency in them for having been habituated to follow the judgment directing upon its present lights.

3. Now the first direction of judgment is to promote the general interest of the Universe, with which our own stands always inseparably connected, as it is the first rule in worldly economy to take care of the main chance; but since we know not how to do this for want of discernment to see in what particulars the great general interest may be affected, we must take guidance from the interests of our fellow-creatures with whom we have a visible connection; for those are the marks which God has given us whereby to know his Will, and what courses help to carry on his great design, the good of the creation. Therefore it behoves us to provide ourselves with such habits as will render us expert in promoting the benefit or enjoyments of mankind

whether in mind, body, or externals, and of ourselves as being included in the number.

The principal of those are faith, and hope, and charity, prudence or the faculty of taking equal concern in the future with the present, endurance of pain, trouble, and disappointment, composure in danger, self-command in joy, moderation in pleasure, equitableness or the capacity of judging in another's case as we would in our own, activity of spirit, cheerfulness of disposition, evenness of temper, unpassive compliance, readiness to please, and easiness to be pleased, and all the other virtues that contribute to the solid good, or innocent entertainment of life; which are not virtues until grown into habits urging spontaneously to action without needing to dive for the reasons whereon they were grounded, and rendering the exercises of them easy.

For ease and pleasure, as I have often said before, are the proper aims of pursuit, but then it is that ease which is the offspring of expertness, not of laziness, and that pleasure which has the sanction of Judgment. The wise and the foolish follow pleasure, though in different ways, for since it is not to be had without some trouble, the one chooses to make his payments beforehand, to take pains for securing himself greater ease and enjoyment, like a good economist who, going to market with ready money, buys at the best hand and has his provisions the cheaper; whereas the giddy spendthrift who takes them up upon tick, never thinking of payment till sued for it, always gives more than they are worth, and is loaded with a bill of costs beside. This ease then which flows from habit it is both our praise and our interest to desire, and consequently to cultivate the habits that will procure it.

Religious habits are best acquired by the practice of religious exercises, by meditation, by occasional reflections as there is room for them, by the performance of good works, and by tracing our references to such as are not usually styled good; and as it will be very easy to see the relation those other social and self-solacing virtues bear to our grand intention of glorifying God, by contributing to the happiness of his creatures, while we keep this relation in mind we shall strengthen our higher virtues in the very act of improving the lower; which are likewise to be cultivated by the same methods of reflection upon the benefits of them, and assiduity in the exercises of them. For assiduity will do more towards gaining a habit than labour and eagerness; the latter may be necessary in cases of difficulty to make a beginning, but the former must perfect it, as the spade and pickaxe may be serviceable to level hillocks in the road, but it is the continual beating that lays it smooth and even.

I do not deny that what strikes a strong impression upon the mind may possibly give it a holding turn that shall continue ever afterwards, as a distorted limb is sometimes set to rights by a violent stretch; and so a deathbed repentance may have the like effect upon the spiritual body as an habitual holiness, by forcing the joints of it into a suppleness that is ordinarily the produce of frequent applications: but it is very hazardous making such experiments, and therefore much safer to enter upon storing provision of salutary habits while we have time before us for a gradual progress.

And that we may be able to make the best use of our time, it will be advisable to stand always upon the watch for opportunities of exercising them; for by accustoming ourselves so to do, we shall fall into another habit introductive of all the rest, I mean, that of quickness in discerning our

advantages with their particular uses, and of ease and readiness in applying them thereto. We may likewise take the benefit of example and sympathy from the persons we converse amongst; instead of criticising their dress, their faces, or their faults, we may observe what good habits they have, and their manner of proceeding in them, in order both to improve our judgment, and stimulate our industry in catching whatever is valuable from them; for this is an allowable theft, because it enriches the taker without endamaging the owner.

4. There is no living in the world without falling into habits, the world itself draws us into them insensibly by the objects it presents, and the ways of men bustling about in it, our natural wants and appetites, and the activity of our imagination, ever restless without something to engage the notice, lead us into them: many useful and necessary habits are gained this way; the idioms of speech, the management of our limbs, the common forms and modes of behaviour, most of our tastes and inclinations; and the compositions, associations, or trains of ideas whereon knowledge and judgment depend, are but their customary uniting together in assemblages, or following successively in habitual tracks.

Since then we must have some habits or other, and they frequently grow awry to our great inconvenience and damage, it will be necessary to guard against evil habits, as well as to cultivate the good ones; for there is much less trouble in preventing than remedying a mischief, as it is easier to pick out weeds on their first sprouting, than after they have shot their clusters of roots deep into the ground: therefore this ought to be made a principal part of our self-examinations, to observe what unlucky customs are growing upon us, and to break them before they become inveterate.

Pleasures, as well as toils and difficulties, become indifferent by growing habitual, for the one lose their relish and the other their irksomeness. The man who goes to plough every day, and he that drudges at cards every day, pass their time much in the same degree of satisfaction, which amounts to no more than a state of ease; but there is this very material difference between them, if you give the labourer a holiday, he throws away his tackle with joy, if you debar the man of pleasure from his customary amusements, he sits upon thorns till he can return to them again. This we may see exemplified every Sunday, which proves a day of recreation to the one, but a lamentable burden to the other, under the weight of which he does not know what to do with himself, unless by the two potent arguments, a laugh and an exclamation, he can prove there is no harm in playing at cards on Sundays too: therefore, if there were no other use in the observation of that day, there would be this, that it serves to break into our habits, thereby preventing them from gaining so entire an ascendant over us, that we can never live at rest without them.

For diversions, which were at first the object of genuine desire, by too frequent indulgence corrupt into wants, they then cease to delight when we have them, but only make us uneasy when we have them not: so they cheat mankind into a false estimation of their value by the eagerness perceived in the pursuit; but men will bestir themselves to escape uneasiness as eagerly as to hunt after enjoyment. Therefore those are the safer and more profitable habits, which inure us to labour, trouble, and difficulty in the prosecution of our genuine desires, for they are not likely to get the mastery over us, nor become necessary to our peace, but only remove the impediment of irksomeness lying in the way, bring us into greater expert-

ness, and leave the thoughts more at leisure to contrive measures for accomplishing our designs.

5. As there are habits of acting so there are likewise those of apprehending, judging, and thinking; the former indeed proceed from the latter, for what the mind affects strongly, the hand will be ready to execute; but there are some customary trains the ideas are thrown into by objects occurring, and others they run in spontaneously without any thing external to occasion their motions. Those which lie in the reflection are hardest to be guarded against or to be cured, for imagination can rove upon her own fund, without needing any foreign materials to employ her; her wanderings lie under no control of other persons, because they cannot be known by them, they do not break forth in outward acts by which our senses might take alarm, so we practise them without knowing of it; they creep upon us insensibly, we think only to indulge a momentary pleasure till by frequent repetitions it grows into a habit rendering us incapable of entertaining any other subject whenever the humour sets in for that. It is this way that vanity strikes its fibrous roots, that pride, ambition, covetousness, romantic schemes of pleasure and ruinous projects take so strong hold upon us; this foments revenge, and produces the delirious fondness of love. For there seems no harm in imagining things to be as we wish, it is an innocent amusement; and so indeed it would be, were the matter to end there; but when indulged till it creates a want, till we cannot be easy without it, nor content with any other amusement, it then becomes highly nocent, not terminating with our own disquiet and torment, but sooner or later breaking into extravagant and pernicious actions.

Therefore it behoves us to watch over our imagination, and as soon as we perceive any such trains beginning to form there, to break them off before they grow into inveterate habits, by refusing ourselves that innocent amusement which would rivet them deeper: or if they have already taken hold, to loosen it as fast as possible, by avoiding such objects as are likely to foment them, and occupying our thoughts some other way. Any business, diversion, or amusement that can keep the attention engaged elsewhere, is allowable in a case of this importance: for liberty is the perfection and happiness of man, and liberty of mind more so than that of body; but we shall never be freemen, until we can turn our thoughts as well as our hand which way we please without reluctance, difficulty, or obstacle.

6. But there are habits contracted by bad example or bad management, before we have judgment to discern their approaches, or because the eye of reason is laid asleep, or has not compass of view sufficient to look around on every quarter. The world on all sides assists the covert workings of vanity, entices into selfishness, indolence, and various kinds of pleasures: company sometimes draws unwarily into habits of drinking, swearing, over-delicacy, and dissipation. There are habits of misapprehension and misjudging common among all degrees of men; fretfulness, industrious to seek or even feign and chew upon matter that may nourish it; captiousness ingenious in perverting the meaning of words; partiality warping everything to its own purpose; censoriousness unable to discern a bright part in characters; self-conceit averse to discern the real motives of acting; melancholy auguratiñg always for the worst; besides many more, some of which I am afraid every man may find lurking in his own breast, if he will but look narrowly enough.

In all these cases there is not a want of sagacity nor information to judge better, but the customary turn of imagination will admit no ray of light but such as coincides with it. Therefore where we are too late for prevention, we must be the more diligent in applying a cure, which is effected not only by a resolute restraint, but less painfully and perhaps more successfully, by stirring up some desire which may draw us off from our customary ways; especially where the fault lies in the imagination, for if you resolve to bear in mind that you will not think of such a particular thing, you make it the object of your reflection by so doing: therefore it is better, seek for other things you will resolve to think of, for then of course you will keep clear from that you would avoid.

But we must not desist from the application too soon, for though habit has not the force of passion, it is more tough and stubborn; when you think you have quite weakened its spring, it will recoil again with wonted vigour: like air kept condensed between two brazen hemispheres, which will not expand at first upon giving it vent, but very soon recovers all its former elasticity. The keeping our habits in order may serve for a good school of self-denial, wherein the lessons are easier than those of bearing pain, sickness, losses, hardships, and labours, besides that we but rarely have calls to those arduous exercises.

And I cannot help thinking, that if pious women, instead of humiliations and self-afflictings, would set themselves in good earnest to pass a day without any motions of fretfulness, peevishness, censoriousness, dilatoriness in the business of their families, forebodings of mischief, lamentations upon the wicked world, or other infirmity that does so easily beset them, it would prove a more acceptable sacrifice, and a more profitable service.

But good habits will want rectifying sometimes as well as bad ones, for without warping into a wrong bias they may become improper by a change of circumstances, like children's clothes out-grown before they are worn out. The man reduced from affluence by losses, must take up other thoughts and other measures than he was used to before: the attention to small profits and parsimony habitual to the trader must be thrown aside when by his elder brother's death he comes into possession of the fox hounds, and the tubs of election ale. The same ways are not suitable to the boy, the youth, and the old man, the new convert and the well-exercised in Religion, the learner, and the proficient in any art or science. Scarce a year passes but new connections, new engagements or accidents call upon us to depart from some of our former customs, and inure ourselves to new ones. Therefore we must always be learning, and always shaping our courses according to the several windings in our line of life: for it is a miserable thing for a man to have no employment for his thoughts, unless in hankering after practices that were reasonable for him aforetime though now become unfeasible and unsuitable.

CHAP. XXXII.

CREDULITY AND INCREDULITY.

I JOIN these two because they generally go together, one being a consequence of the other: for it is the strong attachment to particular persons that makes men averse against hearkening to others, and less attentive to

mind what is said, than who said it. Nature made us extremely credulous in our infancy until the cautions learned from our parents and tutors have armed us with an inflexibility to whatever contradicts the principles imbibed from them, or if we become refractory to parents and tutors it is commonly owing to the suggestions of some seducer, to which we have given an easy reception: thus in both cases we disregard one person, only because another has gained our entire confidence.

But the terms of my present subject do not relate solely to the credit found with us by other persons, they extend likewise to all kinds of evidence presenting to the thought which are made to lose their just weight by the fondness we have for whatever they tend to invalidate: so that we become incredulous upon some points by being too credulous of others, for the same prejudice that draws down one scale must necessarily raise up the other. This truth stands exemplified in persons of all denominations: the bigot and the free-thinker, the orthodox and the sectary, the courtier and the patriot, the lover, the projector, and the schemist will receive whatever favours their humour upon the slightest evidence, and reject whatever thwarts it though coming with the strongest.

For there are three causes of the errors we commit, one the want of sufficient lights to inform our judgment or of sagacity to discern them: this may draw us into some present inconveniences, but cannot affect our main concern; the errors will be mere errors without carrying anything blameable in them; they may excite pity or perhaps a smile, but can draw censure from none, except those whose censure we may justly despise. Another is the want of resolution to execute what our judgment clearly discerns to be right: this is only to be excused by the imbecility of human nature, and where such excuse cannot be pleaded, is indeed a fatal error which we must strive to rectify by the exercises of self-denial and vigilance before recommended. The third is an unlucky custom we fall into of blinding the judgment by shutting out some of the lights that would flow in upon it, and magnifying others with the glass of eagerness to contemplate them: this though a fault of the Will is such a one as no man stands totally exempt from, for it proceeds often from secret motives which we are not aware of, nor is it easy to know when we ought to give our assent and when to withhold it, or when the scale hitches in the briers of prejudice; therefore it behoves us to be very attentive in looking about for such impediments, and careful to loosen them when discovered.

But it will be asked to what purpose we are exhorted to give, or withhold our assent? is not assent involuntary, the act of the objects before us, not of the mind? can any man with all his efforts dissent from the truth that two and two make four, or assent to their making five? All this is very true; nevertheless, though we cannot command assent, we may many times command the means that will infallibly work it: as a man cannot help reading the page he looks upon, nor see things otherwise than are there contained, yet he may shut the book or turn to any other page he pleases, and so choose what he shall see, although he be purely passive in the faculty of vision.

2. Assent belongs to propositions, and is an additional perception over and above those of the terms contained in them, commonly called an opinion or judgment; for though Thomas be taller than John, they may both stand before me, and I may have a full view of their persons, yet without observing which of them is the taller, that is, without framing any mental proposition concerning their height to which I may assent. And among

the objects we are daily conversant with, there are a thousand judgments might be passed upon them which never come into our heads, nor indeed is it possible they should all find room there: therefore besides the power we have by our hands, our eyes, or our memory, to bring objects before us, we have likewise a choice of what propositions we shall form out of the materials in our reflection.

But our present subject stands concerned with such propositions only as occur spontaneously to our thoughts, or are suggested by other persons; yet even here we have a choice in what manner we shall receive them, whereon the assent they shall gain very frequently depends. For except in things very familiar to our acquaintance, where the judgment has been joined in association with the terms, it does not rise immediately upon inspection, but they must be held in contemplation some little time before it will follow: and as our ideas fluctuate for a while both in strength and colours, the determination will be very different according as taken from them in their highest or their lowest state. Therefore in all arguments, whether occurring to the thought or suggested by another, a man must aid himself to come at the decision, by giving them a due consideration and waiting till the fluctuation ends.

The manner of proceeding herein is what I take to be understood by giving or withholding assent, which is done hastily or fairly according as you strive to fix a colour, while they are transient, or stay till they fix of themselves; for you neither can nor ought to give any other assent, than that which results naturally from the colours of your ideas. But the colour of our ideas is often affected by the mixture of others standing in company with them; therefore if you hold one set in your thoughts to the exclusion of all others, they may have a very different aspect from what they would, had you given those others admittance.

Thus assent may be wrongfully given or withheld two ways, either by a partial choice of the objects you will contemplate, or by fixing your judgment upon them at some particular moment during their fluctuation of colour; as a witness deposing positively to a fact will be credited if you refuse to hear other testimony by the weight of which he may be overborne, or may appear to prove a point if you stop him short as soon as he has related the circumstances tending to confirm it, without suffering him to proceed in the rest of his evidence, which might make the contrary manifest.

This is innocently practised every day in that temporary persuasion we assume in reading a poem, a fable, or a novel, where we imagine incidents to be true while going on with the story, but whenever admitting our old ideas to return again into view, we presently know the whole to be a fiction. The same is done in following the rule laid down by Tully for an Orator, that he should make his client's case his own: and that prescribed by Horace to such as would touch the passions, which he says they cannot do without putting on the very sentiments they would inspire. So likewise in study and deliberation it is often useful to imagine things for a while otherwise than they really are, for a false supposition may let in lights for our better discernment of the truth.

Yet there is some limitation to this power of temporary persuasion, for though one may imagine Fortunatus to possess a purse in which he shall always find ten guineas immediately after he has emptied it, yet we could not imagine him endued with a faculty of making twice ten guineas to be a hundred, or any other number he should want: and though we might fancy a Fairy causing a house to rise at once out of the ground with a stroke of her

wand, or contract Paul's church to the size of a pea, yet while continuing in its own dimensions we could never conceive her enclosing it within a nutshell: which shows that we cannot create a new colour in our ideas or our appearances, but can only catch such as they take in their fluctuations by some similitude with things we have seen.

Therefore poetry, whose province lies chiefly in fiction, nevertheless is restrained to probabilities, that is such things as imagination can suppose to be real: and for the same reason as we grow up we become less and less delighted with extravagant tales, because to children the common works of men appear conjuration and miracle, so that the marvellous and the preternatural is nothing strange to them, for they can always find something similar in their apprehension among the things they have seen.

3. By frequently supposing things true we may bring ourselves to believe them true, the temporary persuasion settling into a fixed one. This happens not so often in facts supposed already past, as in the expectation of similar events likely to fall out in the world. For though the probability of incidents required in fiction be no more than a possibility, yet it implies a possibility that the like may happen again, which being continually fed upon in the imagination, will turn into a high degree of probability.

Hence springs the mischief done to such as are much conversant in plays or novels, for having perpetually filled their head with ideas of Strephons and Phillises, they expect to find a faithful nymph or swain in whatever their fancy sets upon; the charming creature whose beauteous form or engaging prattle strikes irresistibly must needs be possessed of all valuable perfections; the discovery of a prince stolen away in his cradle, or the sudden death of a rich uncle, or some extraordinary chance that has happened in the world before, and so may happen again, may reconcile parents, set all to rights, and prove they have made a lucky choice, which will do full as well as if they had made a wise one.

Hence likewise the spirit of gaming, for luck may run on one side for a month together, and if it may why should it not? hence the fury of lotteries, for though the possibility of each ticket getting the great prize be no more than one in sixty thousand, yet by continual ruminating upon this little shrimp of a possibility, it is commonly swelled into a probability to be depended upon so far as to lay schemes for disposing of the produce.

For the most part we are led to dwell upon suppositions by the pleasure they give the imagination; therefore it is a common observation, that men easily believe what they wish to be true, for they first suppose it to be true as matter of entertainment, until by frequency of supposal it grows into a persuasion: for we can very seldom trace our judgments up to their first principles, therefore the character of truth they have used to bear in our thoughts is an evidence of their being true, and it is not easy to remember whether such character was affixed by a continual amusing supposition, or by solid conviction. In some tempers imagination takes the contrary turn, they ruminate constantly upon the things they dread, and always suppose the worst that may happen: this practice not only increases evils by drawing up their strongest colours, but likewise magnifies chances, raising a bare possibility into an imminent danger. Where either of these habits have been contracted, it is the hardest matter in the world to admit a supposal that does not tally with them: the sanguine man can scarce form an imagination of anything that may cross his desires, nor the melancholy man of anything that can give him comfort.

But this stiffness of the faculty is a main obstacle against our following

the golden rule, wherein we must be aided by a readiness of supposing ourselves in the condition and circumstances of another: it contracts our notions by rendering us incapable of entering for a moment into others of a different kind: it makes everything strange and absurd that we were not familiarly acquainted with before; and it retards our reasoning, which cannot effectually go on without giving opposite sentiments their turn to possess our imagination singly, until they come to their full colour before we set them in comparison with their antagonists.

Therefore it is a very valuable art, hard to be learned but well worth the pains of acquiring, to suspend our desires, our prepossessions, our customary trains and former judgments for so long as is requisite, and be able to fix our attention upon things the most opposite to them: for without this we shall never attain a perfect impartiality nor true freedom of thought, and if we could accomplish this, though we might still remain liable to involuntary mistakes, we should never more pass a faulty judgment. However, as such entire command over imagination is not to be gained, it behoves us to be constantly suspicious of inclination and prejudice, to observe which way they draw, to make allowances for their attraction, and even to stir up a partiality against them which may suffice to counterbalance their weight.

4. But it may be asked, is there not a presumption in favour of old opinions? This I never have denied, nor would have them called in question upon every slight objection suggested, nor even cast aside when questioned, unless the opposite weights visibly preponderate; for while the balance hangs even, or keeps nodding to and fro, the presumption ought still to prevail. I do not pretend to lay down rules for directing when an examination ought to be entered upon, which perhaps might be impossible, at least is past my skill, therefore must be left to every man's discretion: I only say that when he does think fit to enter upon it, he cannot keep his imagination too open for receiving every consideration his own sagacity or that of another person can suggest, and giving them room to expand with all the colours they are capable of exhibiting. During this operation the former judgments ought only to suspend their action, but not to lose their vigour, which will be wanted when they come to be called to mind again in order to make a fair comparison between them and their opponents.

For there is a defect in the faculty when it cannot distinguish between a supposition made to be examined into, and an approved truth, nor estimate the strength of opposite evidences confronted together in their full colours, nor can give fair play to one without its quite obscuring the other. Persons who labour under this infirmity are perpetually wavering; they have a hundred different opinions in a minute, or rather never have any opinion at all, but wander in a labyrinth of doubts without ever coming to a determination that they can confide in.

But some confidence in our judgment is absolutely necessary in time of action, for else it will be of no use to us, nor shall we ever proceed steadily and vigorously to complete any design: and in seasons of deliberation it ought not to be parted with during the time of deliberating, nor until some decision be maturely formed upon which we may place the like confidence. For if a suggestion occurs that the measures I have resolved upon may be wrong, I shall still presume them right until fully satisfied of the contrary; and if the business requires immediate dispatch so that there is not time for obtaining such satisfaction, I shall pursue them without heeding the suggestion.

Nor is it needful the judgment should be founded on demonstration to deserve our confidence, for this is very rarely to be found by the human understanding upon matters of greatest importance in prudence and practice: therefore it is expedient to study the art of judging accurately upon probabilities, which where they can be clearly discerned, are a sufficient ground for confidence to remain with them, until new lights break in or circumstances alter, whereon a new judgment may be formed with the like accuracy. It is the vain expectation of absolute certainty that keeps men continually wavering and irresolute, for being afraid of trusting to anything that has not such certainty, and being able to find it nowhere, they live in a round of doubts without settling upon any one point: but some courage as well as caution is requisite to secure a freedom of thought, and open a passage to proficiency in any science.

But you must not always take people at their word when they talk much of doubting, for this language is often used as a civiller way of contradicting than telling you bluntly that you are in an error, which they would be ready enough to do if they were not afraid of putting you out of humour. If you observe those people who pretend to be fullest of doubts you will find them most fond of that positive phrase, I will venture to say, and they employ both expressions with equal propriety, for as they never doubt of a thing without being perfectly sure it is false, so they never venture to say, unless when confident they run no hazard of being confuted.

I am apt to think there never yet has really been such a monster in the world as a thorough sceptic; but he that doubts of what is agreed to by everybody else, does it upon being fully possessed of notions that never found admittance in any other head: and there is an air of positiveness in all scepticism, an unreserved confidence in the strength of those arguments that are alleged to overthrow all the knowledge of mankind.

5. Thus partial judgment springs from a feebleness either to retain former decisions in their original vigour, or to give due consideration to matters opposite to them; the one renders us credulous, and the other incredulous. This weakness being natural can never be totally cured, but may be helped by good management, therefore the blame lies in not applying our diligence to work as much amendment as is feasible.

The first care should be to make our decisions maturely, for it is common through mere laziness to take them up in haste before they are half formed, and then there always remains a latent suspicion which renders them unable to maintain their ground against any specious opposition: but where there is a consciousness of the best information possible having been taken, it fixes their colours beyond hazard of being faded by the approach of other objects. Then with respect to such of them as are of importance in our conduct or our future reasonings, the next point is to habituate the imagination to cast them up spontaneously with the same lively vigour wherein they were delivered to her by the understanding, which is what I have called turning conviction into persuasion. By this means we shall become less credulous of other persons, of the suggestions of passion and fancy, or appearances of the senses.

For avoiding the other extreme it will be expedient to bear in mind that our surest decisions may possibly have deceived us, for there is nothing so certain as that we know nothing with infallible certainty: in the next place to accustom ourselves to observe and examine upon a fair opportunity offering, and acquire a readiness to depart from old notions upon cogent reasons: I know such practice may sometimes endanger the simple being

imposed upon by artful persons, but there is something lying within the sphere of every one's observation, and if he does not exercise himself therein he can never learn, because all learning implies some alteration of the judgment: for a sense of our ignorance and an aptness to learn upon information suited to our capacity I take to be the two best preservatives against incredulity. But it will be needful to stand always upon the guard against passion, inclination, and every habitual bias, for they will bring on distempered weakness upon the faculties more hurtful than the natural; and I conceive it is in the freedom from those, in an exemption from tenaciousness of old notions and fondness for new ones, that sound judgment and discretion consist.

CHAP. XXXIII.

EMPLOYMENT OF TIME.

To know the sources of our enjoyments, what things are good and useful for us, and to acquire an habitual diligence in procuring them, are certainly very valuable attainments, because they supply us with aims and desires which strike the brightest colours of our lives; but something further is wanting to fill up the spaces between, and make the whole an entire piece. For our desires do not always find fuel to feed on, materials and opportunities are not always to be had for carrying on our pursuits, and when they are ended, the joy of having gained our point can entertain us but a little while, ere we want fresh matter to engage us. The busy mind of man cannot rest in a state of indifference; if it has not satisfaction it will fall into uneasiness, and every fleeting moment must have its distinct portion of one or the other: it avails nothing to me now, how much I was delighted an hour ago, or shall be delighted an hour hence, without some present reflection on the future, or some different object to engage in the interval.

Therefore I have laid down, that intense pleasures are not so valuable as generally apprehended, unless when they give scope for a length of agreeable pursuit, or furnish materials to the imagination and briskness to the spirits for our better entertainment afterwards, because else the benefit we receive from them lies shut up within a very small compass of time: but happiness must be computed upon the whole balance of pleasures and pains compared together, so that great delights with large vacuities of uneasiness between may still leave the condition miserable.

Hence appears that the true secret of happiness lies in contriving to be continually pleased rather than highly pleased, and this is best effected by providing constant employment for our time; for so long as the thoughts are employed in anything just sufficient to engage our attention, the mind is satisfied; it is only when there is a stoppage of motion, when there is nothing more desirable to be done than omitted, when under some pain or want without means discerned on any side to do something for removing them, that the time passes irksome and heavy: for things insipid are always displeasing as well to the mental taste as to the palate.

The world commonly seek for engagement of their thoughts from external objects, circles of pleasures and amusing ideas suggested to their ima-

nation; all these may do very well while there flows an uninterrupted supply of them, and so long as they continue really engaging: but the misfortune is they are not always to be had, or they quickly cloy, and then recourse must be had to some new fancy, until having exhausted all their tastes, novelty itself becomes nothing new and variety grows a stale expedient, unable any longer to force a relish.

One may see how lamely this method of employment answers its purpose by the great dilatoriness there is in going to engagements, by which means they have been put off later and later, until our hours of amusements are almost run into midnight. Whereas where there is an expectation of real delight, people are eager to run to the place beforehand, instead of which they do not care to think of one indulgence until another is grown wearisome; they rise, because tired of lying a-bed, they come home to dinner because tired of sauntering about; for while any little trifle amuses, they care not how long dinner waits, and do not go abroad until driven by the irksomeness of not knowing what to do with themselves at home: it is ridiculous to see how many shifts are made to kill time, as it is called, and how lucky it is thought when such can be found; so that one may say, they are perpetually upon the hunt for engagement, but very rarely catch it or are actually engaged.

Therefore business and those preparations of pleasure which partake of the nature of business, as requiring long contrivance and application, are more productive of engagement than pleasure itself; for there the active powers are employed as well as the passive, but what depends upon our own activity is much less precarious than what we receive from other causes. Therefore we may presume, that God has placed the far greater part of mankind under a necessity of working in some way or other, and subjected the rest to their portion of care, contrivance, and application, because he sees with other eyes than we do, and may know those are the happiest parts of life which appear burdensome to us.

He that plies to his business finds it, when grown familiar to him, a state of satisfaction; his mind is wholly intent upon it; it is only in the vacancies of attention thereto that he ever thinks or feels a want of the advantages possessed by others above him; he returns regularly to his work without staying till tired of what he had been doing before, and leaves off, not because satiated, but because his time or his tale is ended; he receives a solace from seeing the progress made as he goes along, and rises from labour with refreshed organs to find a relish in any passive engagements that may fall in his way: nor is it the least distinguishing mark of difference between the civilized and the savage, that the one spend their days in idleness and gaping, unless while fighting with man or beast, whereas the others have a multitude of employments to busy themselves upon. Even pain and disappointment have their uses in finding employment to guard against them: a total disengagement, with an utter inability of finding any, is more likely to make men weary of their being than hurts and vexations; for we may see persons grievously oppressed with them desirous enough to live, nor do they ever become otherwise until there appears nothing to be done for removing them; whence it is become an expression of the heaviest complaint to say, I am so ill I do not know what to do, which implies that so long as we know what to do, things are not at the worst.

Men are ready to own that what comes to them by the choice of their will is more likely to please than what comes from another quarter, but

they do not consider that the will is generally more active in business than in pleasure. It may be true indeed that people seldom work unless when they cannot help it, and the very essence of business seems to lie in its being no matter of choice but something that must be done; for else if what is done might have been omitted without any inconvenience, we count it done for amusement. But then the compulsion lasts no longer than to drive us to our task; when entered upon it all the steps taken in the performance are severally the choice of the will, preferring those that are proper before others that would tend nothing towards completing the design: whereas in pleasures of indolence, there is only one choice made of a general indulgence, and the will has nothing more to do afterwards than to keep the senses agape for receiving whatever agreeable objects shall happen to present.

3. Therefore active pleasures wherein there is something continually to be done for carrying them on, are the most valuable, because approaching nearest to business and furnishing employment together with objects of delight, nor are they apt to satiate even when they are weary: satiety is worse than weariness, because it does not give that relish to the bare removal of objects one is cloyed with, as is found in rest after a fatigue.

Persons who stand exempt by their situation in life from the necessity of application to any thing, yet find another necessity obliging them to it for employment of their time, without which they would be left in a worse condition than those whom they despise. So that if they have not business supplied them by the acquisition of some art or science, by the management of their estates, by some useful service to be done the public, their friends, their neighbours, or themselves, they must create business by an attachment to some fanciful scheme, or innocent undertaking. Building a fine house, laying out an elegant garden, making a collection of butterflies, working a carpet, picking up curious pieces of China at auctions, serve to make a gentleman or lady, while earnest in the prosecution, just as happy as a carpenter is when sawing his boards, or a seamstress when stitching her linen: for they are alike intent upon their work; they think of nothing else, want nothing, and regret nothing, and so long are in a state of enjoyment.

This use I have already found in my chapters, for if they shall do no benefit to anybody else, they have been of benefit to me, by keeping me engaged for many hours which otherwise might have passed vacant and irksome: nor am I solicitous to prove my engagement more delectable than that of the carpenter sawing his boards, or the commoner pushing his interest for a title, or a fine lady assiduous at her routs; for I wish to pass as much of my time as possible with a satisfied mind, but care not how many others pass theirs as well satisfied, the greater numbers of them can be found I esteem it the more for my interest, for reasons formerly mentioned and needless here to repeat.

Nevertheless, as there is no benefit to be reaped in this world but what is attended with some inconveniences, I have sometimes had it hinted, that this engagement of mine draws me off from more obligatory engagements; whether this be so I cannot tell, being no judge of the several degrees of importance among them, nor am I sure that my monitors speak upon full cognizance and mature deliberation of the cause, therefore do not look upon the point as completely settled. However, there is a caution necessary to be taken, that no particular attachment be suffered to swallow up

all our other desires, or take out all the relish we used to find in the objects of them; for then there is a hazard it may lose its own, and we shall not so much follow, as be driven into it by not knowing what to do with ourselves: or if that does not happen it will often corrupt into a want, for whenever called off to other necessary offices, we shall walk upon tenters while they detain us, and be continually wanting to return to the favourite employment again.

But it conduces greatly to a happy life to have as many desires and as few wants as possible; for desire makes work engaging, and thereby quickens the active powers; but want, which is always of something that cannot be had, hangs as a dead weight upon our activity; it opens no career to the thing we want, it disengages from the business before us, and turns whatever is necessary to be done into a toil and a trouble. Wherefore it is well worth while to take care, that our desires hang loose upon us, so as readily to give place to one another, according as judgment and occasion shall require: for by this means we shall preserve our freedom, nor be run away with by any of them against our will. And if we can store up a great variety we shall oftener meet with opportunities of gratifying one or other of them, nor scarce ever be reduced to have absolutely nothing to do, which is the most uneasy situation imaginable.

4. Yet variety sometimes creates confusion, if it be not gathered with a proper choice, or not disposed in some regularity of order. I have elsewhere offered what occurred concerning the selection of desires for their usefulness: I am here only to guard against vacuities of disengagement, that may be occasioned by ill management amongst them. Too great a multiplicity might crowd them so fast together, that none could find an issue; but this is rarely the case, for people are more prone to set their hearts upon one or two fancies to the exclusion of all others.

But sometimes they fix upon too great undertakings above their forces to achieve, or so laborious as to exhaust the strength and spirits before the work can be completed: in those cases disappointment must ensue, which is a species of want, and as such always causes a stagnation of activity.

I know that laborious exercises, whether of body or mind, are very engaging where they engage at all, because there must be a strong desire to bring us into them: the fatigues of hunting or other sports of the field, the toils of ambition, and turmoils of avarice, are often very great, and there are some services of virtue that require a painful application of all the powers to perform them well. No doubt there are reasons of duty, of necessity, of expedience, sometimes urging to words of strong exertion liable to frequent hazards of disappointment, but in contriving to have sources of constant employment the point of aim is rather to be always engaged than deeply engaged. For the exhortations to patience of labour and pain are not intended to multiply them upon us as being either desirable or laudable in themselves, but to enable us to bear them without being disconcerted, so as never to drop an engagement we had chosen to enter upon, because of the obstacles they throw in the way; neither does industry so much consist in labour, as in a perpetual activity of mind, never to be stopped nor turned out of any course by the irksomeness of it: to deserve the denomination of a diligent man, one need not always be taking pains, it is enough if one is able to do it whenever expedient, and whenever one will.

In order then to manage matters for the best advantage, it will be convenient to take a survey of our desires, our powers, and the materials we have

to exercise them upon, to form a regular plan of conduct containing some principal aims, and others occasional, the whole accommodated to our situation in life; to take care we harbour no incompatible desires, but part with such as are inconvenient, and nourish up others which there are frequent opportunities of gratifying, for it is a pity we should lose any fund of engagement in our power for want of a relish to make it agreeable.

But desires not naturally incompatible may become so by accident, therefore care is requisite to lay out our engagements in such manner as that they may not interfere, and since this cannot be fully provided against beforehand, to acquire a facility in stopping that desire which the present judgment shall pronounce least expedient. Persons who lead a life of dissipation, seldom knowing one hour what they shall do the next, meet with many tedious vacuities wherein they have absolutely nothing to do; to prevent this it will be expedient to have a scheme of employment for every hour of the day, and every season of the year, and every circumstance among those that ordinarily surround us: the necessities of nature draw some of the principal lines in the stated meals and times of rest, wherein the more regular we can be the better; trades and professions of all kinds add more in the certain hours of attendance to the business of them; and where those sources fail, it is observable how apt men are to run into clubs, parties of pleasure, rounds of visits, and particular customs of disposing of themselves: for there is no finding a constant course for our activity without providing channels for it to run in.

But all rules, whose aim is only to keep the hands employed, ought not to be made inviolable laws like those of the Medes and Persians, for then they generate a stiffness and preciseness which does more mischief than benefit, rendering men troublesome and uncompliant, defective in services that might be expected from them, and unattentive to their own advantages when lying out of the usual road.

The use of those rules is only to lie ready in reserve, that we may never be at a loss what to do with ourselves, to supply us with business when none offers, not to stand in the way of it; they defeat their own intention unless they can give place without reluctance to whatever other engagements we are called to by the rules of duty, or prudence, or civility, or even to such amusements as the fancy strongly recommends, and the judgment does not disapprove.

5. Religion, according as it is understood, will prove either the greatest promoter or the greatest destroyer of engagement that can be found. While placed in obligation, servile fear and perfunctory assiduities to forms and ceremonies, how much soever it may take up of the time, it cannot with propriety be said to engage; for engaging is many times synonymous with charming or delightful, as when applied to a beauty, a dress, a behaviour, a tale, a diversion; and though a man may say he was engaged in a business which was not agreeable to him, yet this is upon a supposition that while intent upon it his procedure in the several steps taken therein was voluntary upon a prospect of some advantage; for where the whole action is manifestly reluctant, as in appearing upon a recognizance the first day of the term, we do not use the word engaged, but obliged.

Nor is that word applied to every thing that draws the attention, unless there be a free consent of the Will to give it; for a man who would excuse himself for failing at a meeting, will hardly say he was engaged at home by a violent toothache, though perhaps the pain engrossed his whole atten-

tion, and he was busied all the while in applying warm flannels, or toasted figs, or other remedies for assuaging it. So he that sings psalms every third hour, or goes to Church every week-day because necessary to secure him from the Devil's clutches, or because he thinks the Holy Spirit would be grieved, and God made uneasy by being slighted, does it only to remove a pressing dread and anxiety, with a forced, not a free consent of the Will, and for the most part is so far from being intent upon his work, that his thoughts run a hankering all the while after something else; or if they do enter upon it by choice, it is like that made of their cards by such as drudge at them every day, namely, to relieve themselves from the insupportable burden of having absolutely nothing to do by having contracted a tastelessness for every thing else.

But these painful assiduities, the task of fear or custom, like the dog in the manger, not only afford no engagement themselves, but stand in the way of other innocent and useful engagements that might keep up a voluntary attention during the performance without drawing on any damage, or leaving any remorse in the reflection behind.

On the other hand, when Religion is understood to be a profitable thing, and that judgment grown into an habituate intimate persuasion branching into the three spiritual virtues, by which means every part of it will be pursued as a step to our truest interest without thought of obligation or of the Devil, whom one would wish to deal with as little as possible, it is then more fertile of real engagement than any other scheme we can propose. For ambition, avarice, and all the ruling passions that give life to the business of mankind, meet with frequent rubs and disappointments, many gaps of time pass insipidly wherein there is nothing to be done for advancing their purpose, and they are sometimes wrested from us by age, infirmity, disease, or satiety.

Whereas he who takes for his aim to do all things for the Glory of God manifested in the good and perfection of the human species, whereon his own happiness depends for ages to come, has an object the most engaging he could have chosen for his pursuit, being the amassing of treasures in a place where neither moth nor rust do corrupt, where thieves do not break through and steal, which will continue to engage in old age, in sickness, in distress, in all situations of life, and even in the hour of death; and which, so far as he can trace his reference to the common occurrences of his station, will leave no gaps nor intermissions of employment; for there is always some use to be made of his activity, either upon the ideas of the mind or motions of the body; there is a right and a wrong in every action; so that his industry can never want a subject to exercise itself upon in observing and practising that, which is right according to the circumstances of every occasion that offers.

CHAP. XXXIV.

CONTENT.

Prudence and virtue, for the most part, consist in preferring greater enjoyment to come, before present gratification; the contest between them and appetite being, whether we shall be most pleased or soonest pleased for pleasure is the object of both, only appetite urges to that which may be

had now, and prudence chooses that which is the greatest, whether to be taken now, or not till to-morrow.

But upon the article of content the struggle seems to be of a quite different kind, both parties pulling the very contrary way from what they used in all other cases. Reason exhorts us to rest easy under our present situation, and suspend our desires until the time shall come when they may find materials of gratification: passion and evil habit solicit us to fret and vex and torment ourselves in present, with the tantalizing imagination of ease or pleasures at a distance lying out of our reach, or to make the most of an uneasiness by studiously aggravating all the grievous circumstances attending it. For the endeavours used to quiet the mind have for their object the present moment, to lighten the pressure actually hanging upon it; they have no respect to the future, nor purpose to accomplish beyond their immediate effects, for it may be all one to-morrow whether we have borne our troubles easily or reluctantly to-day.

On the other hand, the impulses of discontent drive us upon the thorns every current moment, through a perverse kind of prudence, under an apprehension hard to be accounted for of some benefit to redound therefrom. Discontent is a species of grief, which I have remarked upon that article in the chapter on the Passions, we are led into by having experienced that an attentive reflection upon the object that troubles us sometimes discovers a way to remove it, and excites to more strenuous endeavours for throwing it off: the apprehension of this benefit frequently entertained, gives an habitual bent to the reflection, which is continually turned that way by a mechanical impulse very difficult to be overpowered by the utmost strength of resolution.

But there is another cause insensibly draws the will to indulge a greater discontent than would be cast up by the mechanical springs of passion: as we live in society where we frequently stand in need of other people's assistance to relieve us from our distresses, and find them generally disposed to help us, we very soon observe that their eagerness to offer relief rises in proportion to the height of distress; from hence we learn the artifice of oppressing ourselves as much as possible, that we may become the greater objects of compassion and have others fly the faster to our aid. Therefore grief and discontent generally abound in complaints, which though sometimes a little easing them, more frequently double their pressure and strike their roots deeper into the mind.

Therefore likewise children who have been fondled by their parents, and persons who have been much humoured in their way, most commonly grow fretful upon every little disappointment; whereas such as have been always forced to bustle for themselves, and nobody cared a farthing whether they were pleased or angry, bear with troubles the best, for they feel only the immediate pressure, and are so far from drawing it down with additional force by reflection, that they oftener want the sensibility requisite for putting them upon a proper guard against the like evils for the future.

Nevertheless, this, which was artifice and low cunning at first, having by long practice given a turn to the wheels of the machine, becomes involuntary habitude or spontaneous impulse; and then men cannot help fretting inwardly or by themselves where it can do no good, nor even murmuring against Providence, repining at the hardness of their lot, or ruminating upon the cruelty of their fate, all which powers have no passions to be touched with their complaints.

2. One would think there should need no exhortions with men to bestir

themselves for their own present ease, nor arguments to persuade them they are then most secure when having their security in their own hands; for though we can never make ourselves wholly independent on one another, and therefore it is prudent to apply the proper means for obtaining succour in our needs, yet the less we stand in need of succour, the more we can help ourselves, the better; because no aid lies so certainly under our command as that of our own resolution; besides that many of the grievances men vex at, are not of a nature to be relieved by any external application whatsoever, and the tenderness shown to them does but aggravate their vexation by the influence of sympathy.

But men are so fond of indolence that they will not take a little trouble for their own immediate relief, or the force of habit is so great that even the present smart of the thorns it drives them upon, cannot overcome it, which is the more extraordinary because in avoiding the thorns they would fall into a flowery path and so obtain actual pleasure by escaping pain. For though content be in itself nothing more than a negation of uneasiness, yet satisfaction and uneasiness constantly follow so close upon each other, that the moment one disappears, its place is occupied by the other, nor is the mind ever without some degree of either, unless when asleep, and that it is so then is more than any man can demonstrate.

Content when obtained by our own efforts is a deliverance from vexation; but there is a joy in the bare deliverance from evil, a joy in finding ourselves able to throw it off, a complacence and solacing self-approbation in having used our power well for our own benefit; therefore in common language a contented temper is understood to imply a cheerful or a happy temper.

On the other hand, discontent always carries with it a want to get rid of the object it feeds upon; but any gnawing want banishes all desires out of the thoughts which might find present means of gratification, the bitter of it giving a tastelessness to everything else: so there needs only to forbear chewing the want of restoring our relish and putting us into a state of real enjoyment, for when that is gone out of the thoughts, there will be little desires enough ready at hand to engage our activity in something or other that shall make the time pass agreeably.

It is true that wants must sometimes be encouraged, as being necessary upon particular occasions; for we have not always skill or strength enough to raise desires sufficient to carry us on to our remote advantages, in which case we must submit to drudge for them through the thorny paths of uneasiness.

Therefore fear and obligation have their seasons and their subjects wherein there is need enough of them for driving those who cannot be led; compunction, vexation, and remorse at having done amiss are generally the harbingers of virtue, for where there is no love of rectitude you must plough and harrow and tear up the ground to prepare for its reception by a shame and abhorrence of vice; and where there is but little reflection you must engage it first by raising a quick sensibility of mischiefs befalling, or dangers impending; thus making men uneasy and discontented with their present situation in order to put them upon exerting their endeavours to amend it; and when any long or laborious work is to be undertaken, it is difficult to raise such a fervency of desire as may be necessary to carry us through, but that upon rubs or disappointments it will sometimes degenerate into a want. But then in all these cases where we run ourselves upon uneasiness or the danger of it, we ought always to know what we do, to have the con-

sent of our calm judgment upon the necessity or expedience of the thing, to make it our own voluntary act, but never submit to be dragged along by impulse of passion, or importunity of habit.

3. Therefore it will be expedient, so far as is feasible, to keep the eye o understanding perpetually open, to watch the little motions of our ideas and observe whether they proceed from mere mechanical impulse, or whether they can answer the end proposed in them: for this is the most likely means to prevent an evil habit from taking root, and to wear it off again when unhappily contracted.

For habits steal insensibly upon us before we are aware, and this of discontent has many causes contributing to its growth: the folly of servants and indiscretion of parents sow the seeds of it in our childhood, and when we come out into the world there are examples around us more than enow to cherish their growth: the godly fret at the profaneness and licentiousness of mankind, at the prosperities of the wicked, at their own want of more than human strength to perform punctually all the rigorous tasks they have enjoined themselves; the poor fret at being subjected to labour, the rich of losing opportunities of growing richer, the proud at having their tribute of homage withheld, the accomplished at the want of due encouragement to merit; the connoisseur in music, if one may use the catheacresis, delights to make himself miserable on hearing anything that is not Italian, the elegant on seeing things vulgar and out of taste about them. In short, how amply soever we are provided with materials of enjoyment, there is something still, as Prior says, For books, for horses, houses, painting; to thee, to me, to him is wanting: that cruel something unpossest, corrodes and poisons all the rest.

Especially in these countries, whether from the gloominess of our climate, the plenty of fresh meats, or the wantonness of liberty, there is more discontent and less ground for it, than in most nations upon earth. The spirit of censoriousness, criticism, detraction, and calumny, make us torment ourselves to plague one another, and many times without that effect by vilifying in secret those who cannot suffer thereby, because they will never know of it; but a man cannot be pleased within himself, when displeased with his company, nor while ruminating upon odious objects. Since then we live in such an infectious air and must perpetually run hazards of catching this distemper of the mind, which many times generates a similar distemperature of the bodily humours, it behoves us to stand upon our guard against the contagion, and keep our minds in tranquillity whatever turbulence we see boiling around us, resolved never to part with our present ease, unless upon security of some future good to be had in exchange: for enjoyment is the treasure that makes everything relative to it valuable, therefore it is a folly to give up one's pleasures without a reasonable prospect of greater pleasures to be purchased by the sacrifice.

It may be expedient sometimes to censure and complain heavily as an engine to work upon the passions of other people, but he is an unskilful manager who is catched in his own artifices; he is like an unlucky boy that snatches the coachman's whip, and whips out his own eyes in going to lash the horses. And though Tully and Horace have admonished their orator and poet to be vexed and grieved themselves if they would excite compassion and vexation in the audience, yet there is a wide difference between an assumed sentiment the effect of judgment, and a spontaneous emotion the impulse of habit; therefore we must learn, like the orator and poet, to raise a temporary passion to such degree and continuance as is re-

quisite, and to throw it aside again as soon as the business is over; for this seems to be the last perfection of a well-disciplined imagination.

4. But if we find any symptoms of the splenetic disease in our temper (as who is there who may not find them if he watches carefully for their appearance?) it will be a useful application of our industry to resist their convulsions whenever we perceive them, taking care we be not discontented at being unable to quiet our discontent upon the first efforts, for this would deter us from returning to the charge again. But habit is not to be worn off presently, for as it gathered strength by repeated acts so it can only be weakened by a continuity of repeated resistances; therefore diligence will do more upon it than strength, and a calm, steady resolution will prove better effectual than violent exertion.

The point of aim for our vigilance to hold in view is to keep judgment constantly upon her seat, to preserve an even steady temper, unruffled by difficulties, untransported by allurements; to dwell upon the brightest parts in every prospect, to call off the thoughts when running upon disagreeable objects, and strive to be pleased with the present circumstances surrounding us. We may practise this first in little matters such as occur within the compass of every day, when called away from a pursuit we are earnest upon, whether writing chapters or sonnets, whether singing a third-hour hymn, or reading a novel, or finishing a head-dress? when obliged to sit in humdrum company, or wait for the fifth head of a tedious, heavy sermon, when reduced to coarse fare and bad accommodations at an inn, or having wandered out of our way upon a journey, when forced upon a business we do not like, or debarred a pleasure we had promised ourselves a long while. For by maintaining our serenity and composure in these lesser trials we shall wean our minds from an attachment to humour, break the force of habit, and prepare ourselves for patience in labours, pains, and distresses.

And the consideration of these consequences may encourage us to put in use the means for obtaining them, for nothing happens to us in vain, though we may not always find out its significancy; but we may look upon those exercises as easy lessons set us in indulgence to our weakness, to fit us for learning the harder whenever summoned to them, and bring us to a pliancy of attention ready to turn suddenly to any new matter as occasion shall require, and enter fully into every present business without anxiety or reluctance: let us then apply to our easy exercises of which we may continually have store, for we shall reap a benefit from them though we should never be called up to the harder.

For this will forward us on our progress in learning the art of forbearance as well as of endurance, because pleasures enslave by the uneasy want they raise of themselves upon being denied; how delightful soever a pleasure may be while enjoyed, yet if a man does not want it, if he can content himself without it, he will always have the free use of his judgment either to gratify or forbear; for though actual pleasure may lull the eye of reason asleep by totally occupying the thoughts, it is the uneasiness of a craving appetite that drives headlong into wilful excesses. And by a facility of entering fully into any employment before him he may elude the importunity of habit, which is easily resisted for a little while till at last it frets and teases into a compliance, but when the attention is strongly diverted to something else, there is not room for the solicitations of habit to intrude.

A calm and unruffled mind quickens the despatch of business, as it lies more open to discern the means of extricating ourselves from a disagree-

able situation, and employs the whole stream of activity to the best advantage; whereas vexation or discontent clog and divide the thoughts and the forces, wasting more than half of both in unprofitable emotions, they are like convulsions in the legs which make a violent kicking about without gaining a step forwards.

Nor do they unfrequently defeat the very purpose originally proposed by them, for though mankind are generally helpful in proportion to the expressions of distress, we shall sometimes meet with spiteful or artful people who will have their ends in making us vex as much as they can: the best honest revenge we can take upon the one, and best caution against the other, will be to bear their utmost provocations unmoved.

A command of temper is absolutely necessary for a politician, an orator, an ambassador, and a general; nor can man engage in a law-suit prudently, nor maintain an argument soundly, nor scarce transact any business of importance safely without it. But it is too late to stand whetting the sword when the moment of action is come; therefore we must inure ourselves early to the work, or vexation and discontent will force in upon us in spite of all our resolution, which will only make us vex the more at its weakness.

5. Nevertheless, there is a spurious content which is the child of indolence, when men acquiesce in the present condition of things as happening to fall out, because they do not care for the trouble of mending them: so they stifle a rising desire that would stimulate to some great advantage, lest it should cost them pains in the acquisition. But this is making havoc of appetite, instead of correcting it; it is plucking up the corn together with the weeds: for when our desires are gone, our ease will become insensibility, if we have no pains, neither will there be any pleasures nor activity to procure what is good and profitable.

Genuine content lies in the absence of wants, not of desires; for it is one principal branch of it to be content to labour whenever there is a good reason, or upon prospect of something desirable to be earned thereby, which disposition will be aided by a noble ardour taking off the weight of difficulties, so that they may not fret upon the shoulders. A man may rest perfectly satisfied with his present situation without being a whit the more remiss whenever a fair opportunity offers of exchanging it for a better, nor is tranquillity of mind at all incompatible with industry: but that is vicious content, which stands as a bar against improvement, for though it be commendable to consult our present ease, we must not so consult the present as to neglect the future, but apply our cares to either, as prudence shall direct. Acquiescence, like all other sentiments, ought to lie as much as possible under control of the judgment, and depend as little as possible upon mere habit, or the impulse of mechanical springs, to be made an act of the will choosing by the lights of understanding, and the principal habit governing all the rest, ought to be that of readiness in the imagination, to take the ply that discretion would give her.

For with good management we may make an excellent use of the power given us over the ideas in our imagination, to shut out some, and dwell upon others, to join, to separate or compare them, to brighten or fade their colours: by this means we may often stir up a desire, or stop it when corrupting into a want, raise a temporary persuasion for our present use or solace, excite a fervid earnestness when needful, and calm it again when the completion of its purpose or a change of circumstances render it fruitless or hurtful.

But the misfortune is that men choose to be passive even in their activity, being driven by some favourite error or fond passion to exert the power over their ideas in shutting out such as would thwart them, and encourage such as confirm them: like the fox in the fable, who cried down the grapes for sour, because he could not reach them. If his passion really blinded his judgment so as to put him out of conceit of grapes ever after, he was a beast indeed: but as Esop's beasts are generally men, I should rather suppose it was an honest artifice to stop the discontent rising upon his disappointment; and if this were the case, it was a pattern worthy our imitation.

For every method deserves our practising that may inure us to tranquillity without lessening our industry or abating our discretion; but the happiest temper of mind, if it could be acquired, is that of being never contented with our condition when a feasible means occurs of improving it in any respect, and never discontented with a pressure we cannot help, or that cannot be removed without imprudence.

CHAP. XXXV.

RULE, CUSTOM, AND FASHION

As much as we may affect to define Man a reasonable creature, daily experience will manifest to him that observes it attentively, that reason has a very small share in our motions: it can only direct some of the principal of them, but the intermediate spaces are occupied by trains of ideas and impulses rising mechanically in our imagination: and it is well if the principal be directed by reason, for the further we can extend its authority so much the happier for us; but with all our diligence we can never make it complete, but the machine will still retain a greater influence upon our conduct than we can gain for ourselves. For we many times enter upon courses of action unthinkingly, and in the prosecution of them proceed scarce with any consciousness of the minute steps we take; if reflection does plainly mark out our path, we do not always follow it, being hurried a quite contrary way by the impetuosity of passion or fondness of desire; and when best disposed to take the benefit of our understanding, it proves but an imperfect guide. For the proper goal for reason to lead us to, is the greater good, or balance of enjoyment to result from all the consequences of an action; but these it is seldom quick-sighted enough to discern so as to make a fair computation among them.

This being our constitution, it is in vain to think of setting our understanding to lead the active powers continually by the hand, or expect to hold in contemplation the whole expedience of every measure we take; the exercises of that faculty are best bestowed in habituating the internal wheels of the machine to run spontaneously in such trains as appear most eligible when the lights of reason shine clearest, or the eye of Contemplation has the fullest, distinctest prospect in view; and in storing up rules, maxims, and judgments in the memory, which may serve occasionally for immediate direction in shaping our conduct.

For in time of action we have not leisure to examine the expedience of things, we should make no despatch among them if we were to go about it, but must follow implicitly the rule resolved on, or the judgment occur-

'ing; besides that, what reflection we are masters of is little enough to guide us in making application of them to the particular circumstances before us: so that when we act most rationally we cannot so properly be said to know why, as to remember that we formerly did know, nor do we march immediately under the banner of reason, but under the leading of those subaltern impulses which she has chosen for our governors.

Since then this is the case with men of the best natural and improved understandings, what can be expected from the bulk of mankind who want capacity or leisure to trace the long and intricate line of expedience? to tell them of a perpetual dependence upon their reason is the same as bidding them be different creatures than they were made: they must have a clue put into their hands by which they may find their goal without knowing where it lies, for their goal is happiness, but their clue will sometimes lead into labour, trouble, and uneasiness, a road by which they little think to find it: and it behoves every man so far as he is able, to lend a helping hand towards spinning the clue. For we were neither born nor talented for ourselves alone, we are citizens of the universe, inhabitants of the little corner thereof, the dirty pellet where we are now stationed, and whatever we can do for her compatriot reptiles crawling about us, is the best thing to be done for ourselves.

But rule, custom, and fashion are the engines by which men may be drawn into an expedience they do not discern: therefore we ought to be very cautious of weakening the authority of a good rule because we may fancy it needless for ourselves, much less because it lies under some present inconvenience. It were to be wished, that rules could be formed attended with no inconvenience or mischief; but in this elementary globe, the offspring of a chaos not yet grown to perfect symmetry of parts, we must expect to find nothing good without its alloy, so shall do wisely to take the good with the bad; better submit to one, than lose the other.

2. Rule is the substitute of reason to direct in times of darkness when there are not lights, a blaze sufficient for informing the understanding, and to restrain the rovings of appetite by its authority: abut to do the latter there must be an attachment to it, and it must itself have grown into something of an appetite, for else it will remain an unavailing speculation which can only serve to make our errors wilful, because it is the departure from a known rule which renders a procedure faulty; agreeably to what St. Paul has remarked, that where there is no law there can be no transgression.

But it is necessary there should be many rules to answer the several exigencies that may occur, for where they are few, they will be too general to serve for direction in particular cases, without a greater strength of reason than we have to employ: but when numerous, it is unavoidable that they must sometimes clash, and hence arise the perplexities we meet with in the practice of morality; for where there is but one rule applicable to the business in hand, the road is plain, so that we cannot miss of it unless by want of resolution to execute what we know; but when two rules point to opposite measures, it is not always easy to know whether we have taken the right, or the wrong.

A man is urged by his benefactor to what he thinks not quite expedient for the public, his service is due to both, which then shall he prefer? why the public undoubtedly, whose interests he lies under a higher obligation of pursuing than those of any single person whoever: so you think here is a clear decision of the point if he have but virtue enough to follow it; and indeed there is in matters of importance, but is the decision equally clear

in things of smaller concern? what if his friend desires French wine, must he not gratify him for fear of encouraging a trade detrimental to the public? for a man may be faultily scrupulous, as well as laudably conscientious: but who can distinguish precisely in all cases between trifles, and matters of consequence to the public, which no rules of civility, custom, or private obligation ought ever to supersede? and in common transactions there is a rule of justice and of equity requiring an exact impartiality to all, yet something is due to favour and to private prudence; but it is hard to settle the precise boundaries between them so as never to stand at a loss in what instances we are to side with a friend, or deal equitably with a stranger, to take care of ourselves in a bargain, or proceed with an honest, open simplicity.

These difficulties have been made the subject of declamations wherewith to exercise scholars in the art of prudence; and we may find some of them canvassed in Tully's offices: but it is impossible to smooth them all, nor should we be much gainers if they could be totally removed, because they put us upon exerting our understanding to extricate ourselves out of them. Experience shows the little avail of those tomes of casuistry which have been compiled in former times, attempting to frame rules for every occasion that can happen, rules for governing the exceptions to be made in those rules, and settling the precedence among them: if such a scheme could be completed so as to suit every one's apprehension, we should then live by apprehension alone, having no use for our rational faculty to deliberate, to weigh, to balance, and strike out new lights for ourselves.

But we have all some little portion of understanding given us which will admit of improvement by continual use, and though we can seldom act entirely by reason we may often take assistance from it in the construction and application of our rules, in comparing them together, penetrating into the spirit of them, and trying them by the more general from whence they branched.

If whenever the eye sees double so that the point of rectitude appears on opposite sides, we could look along the line of expedience to its origin the greater good, we might then infallibly distinguish the reality from the appearance: but since opportunities for such large discernment very rarely happen, the sole remedy to supply the want of it lies in determining the precedency of our rules, and settling the degrees of authority among them, so that we may know which ought to supersede another by the shock we should feel upon breaking through it: but then great care must be taken, that some secret prejudice do not intrude in the decision, and the vexation of disappointing some favourite inclination be not mistaken for the shock of an offence against rectitude; for it is very common for self-interest to pervert judgment, and for desire to assume the garb and likeness of a rule.

Therefore it is the part of every man to add what he can to the sanction of salutary rules, and preserve the subordination among them, which he may be encouraged to do for his own sake as well as that of the generality; for nobody can attain a thorough knowledge of all points necessary for his conduct so as to proceed by science in all the several branches of it, but he that is able to prescribe in some things may be glad to follow the leading of his neighbours in others. Nor how well soever he may be qualified in point of skill to prescribe, has any of us authority enough to attempt it with probability of success; therefore we shall be most serviceable by joining in with our example and recommendation to add weight to the best of those which are already prevailing.

3. But as the best plants are apt to luxuriate if not carefully watched and skilfully tended, so the attachment to rules sometimes grows too strong, making them a clog instead of a help to our motions; the hunger and thirst after righteousness turns into a vitiated appetite producing righteousness overmuch, and the love of rectitude becomes a preciseness and rigidity unpliant to the common occasions of life. This indeed seldom happens, and then it is by an attachment to one or two favourite rules in neglect of all the rest, for while we pay a due regard to them all they will moderate one another, or submit to the moderation of sober judgment. But as they are not all to be learned at once, for knowledge comes by slow degrees, I should wish to see young people a little overscrupulous in adhering to the few they are acquainted with, for the same reason that Cicero liked better to find his scholar in rhetoric exuberant than barren; because luxuriance is much easier cured than sterility, as a vigorous plant may be pruned with less trouble than you can nourish up a weakly. For the overstrict will run themselves into inconveniences which must teach them experience to correct their error, but the licentious can never be made sensible, how severely soever they suffer by their licentiousness, because having no observation they cannot profit by experience; besides in one case you will have appetite, the natural propensity to ease and pleasure, and the world to assist you, whereas in the other they will all join strongly with the enemy.

The greatest mistakes spring from an apprehension of intrinsic value in rules, whereas neither the rules of religion, nor of rectitude, nor of honour, nor of prudence, are good in themselves: they are only measures tending to a good beyond, they are expedients to make up for our short-sightedness, and supply the place of reason; therefore, when recourse can be had to the principal, the authority of the substitute is superseded. So it behoves us to study the uses of our several rules, and where they can be discerned, no attachment to the letter ought to withhold us from procuring the spirit, or gaining the end, proposed therein by any methods most effectual for the purpose.

But then the discernment ought to be very clear, for the presumption lies always strongly on the side of received rules; nor must the judgment be passed upon a single inconvenience, but computation likewise be made of the mischiefs that may ensue at other times, either to the public or ourselves, upon invalidating their force. Such discernment is most likely to be had where it appears evidently there has been an alteration of circumstances, which may render a rule hurtful that was highly beneficial before, or where it has been palpably misunderstood, or where there is a peculiarity of situation incompatible with the practice of it.

But though rules ought to be founded on reason, sometimes the reason is none other than for regularity and method sake, in which case they may be so far arbitrary or accidental as to give a preference between forms perfectly indifferent before. If there be a long causeway with a hollow way by the side, it is all one whether the passengers going and coming give each other the right hand or the left, yet when one has been pitched upon, it would cause great confusion to break into it. Men acting in concert can perform much more than if each were left to take his own way, but there is no uniting forces unless all will submit to some rule: and a single person may dispatch his work quicker by adhering to the method he had prescribed himself at first, though perhaps there are a hundred other methods which might have answered his purpose as well One principal benefit of government and subordination is that the words of a superior may be a rule to his

dependants, whereby numbers are made to join in the same work, and act as effectually as if the strength of all could be gathered into a single person.

4. The proper sanction of rules is fear, shame, or obligation; there is always something irksome and restrictive in them which we do not choose, but submit to through necessity: to rule is the same as to govern, and the ruling passion does not deserve its appellation for the pleasure it gives when followed with full acquiescence and consent of mind, but because it acts as an imperious tyrant driving upon difficulties and fatigues, and forcing us to do things against our judgment. Indeed, while we can hold the benefits attainable by a rule strongly in contemplation, the desire of them may take out all spice of irksomeness belonging to it, yet still the end remains the sole object of our choice, and we pursue the means because obliged thereto by their being necessary to compass our end. When rules are grown familiar and the practice of them spontaneous, so that it becomes easier to follow them than abstain, they lose their essence though they retain their name; being now no longer rules governing the conduct, but habits or ways of acting fallen currently into, without care or reflection.

But the language of mankind is not so accurate as to keep the terms always strictly to the same signification, therefore it is usual to call those habits by the name of rules which were first contracted under the idea of obligation, by the necessity of escaping some mischief or insuring some desirable benefit. Hence comes it that there is a wide difference between leading a regular life, and living by rule; the one is pleasant, easy, smooth, and dispatchful, the other unengaging, toilsome, stiff, and generally wasteful both of time and strength.

Persons who live by rule, though of their own framing, and many times whimsical enough, are not esteemed to pass their time the most pleasurably while they make a point of proceeding in certain particular forms and methods, for they still act under an obligation though imposed by themselves; their movements are not a whit the less a task for being a task of their own setting. Wherefore prudence should incline us to set ourselves such tasks as may grow into engaging and profitable habits, for then we may get into a course of acting according to rule without being restrained by it: that this is possible, appears in matters of language; those who speak correctly never deviate from the rules of grammar, yet never are guided by them nor once think of them: it is well known how laborious are the exercises of schoolboys while forced to put their words together by rules, but when the structure of phrase has become familiar to them, there is an end of rule, whose use ceases in proportion as a regularity of diction grows to be habitual: and we learn upon the authority of Cicero, that the rules taught by rhetoricians were not of their own invention but drawn from observation upon the ways of managing an argument practised by orators. So that the purpose of rules is nothing more than to lead into that regularity of speech, and of working the springs of persuasion, which was first acquired without any rule at all; and the effect of proficiency in learning is to get rid of the necessity of rules.

The same it is with the arts of religion, morality and prudence; we must submit to rules at first, some of them irksome and rigorous enough to the novice, and this is the thorny way leading into virtue; but trouble is not wisely undertaken unless for the sake of that ease which is the child of expertness, therefore our business is by a steady adherence to salutary rules to bring the mind as fast as possible into a liking of them and turn them

into habits; for then imagination will be disciplined to run spontaneously in regular trains most conducive to our benefit, and desire will anticipate judgment by prompting continually to the very courses which that would recommend: and then are we past the thorny way, and arrived in the delightful champaign, where all is smooth, and clear, and engaging.

Nevertheless, while grovelling in this vale of mortality, we shall still find many quarters of the country beset with the like thorns, through which we must open ourselves a passage by the like resolution and perseverance, striving to work as many beaten roads as we can, that we may range about in pursuit of our own advantages and those of our neighbour, with the better ease and dispatch.

5. There is an affinity between rule, habit, and custom, for they all tend to produce a uniformity of conduct, to prevent our motions from being desultory, and join them together into certain courses. Rule, as I said before, is generally founded on obligation, and begun with some degree of reluctance; but custom is oftener fallen into accidentally, or introduced by convenience, or if it were sometimes imposed by rule, the origin is usually forgotten, and men follow it without other reason than because they see it followed.

There is often a very strong attachment to customs, not only for the trouble and awkwardness found in going an unbeaten road, but for the veneration they are had in, which raises a kind of a scruple of conscience against departing from them; they are conceived to be good in themselves, to make a rectitude; for it is a constant argument among the common people, that a thing must be done, and ought to be done, because it always has been done. History produces instances of insurrections that have been raised by endeavouring to put people out of an insignificant, and perhaps inconvenient custom; and every nation esteems its own customs wise, becoming, and laudable, but those of other countries absurd and ridiculous. Many forms in religion have been held sacred and stickled for, tooth and nail, without other reason assigned, than their ancient and general usage, and you may observe people, very different with respect to the principles of their sect, submit to many inconveniences, rather than be put out of the way they have been accustomed to.

Nor does the prevalence stop at actions, it reaches to the sentiments too; for men have as high a veneration for their usual ways of thinking as of behaviour; what they never questioned in their own minds, and never heard questioned, passes for an innate principle, a self-evident truth, needing no evidence to support it, and which no evidence can overthrow. It was upon this foundation I suppose that Lucretius asserted so roundly that nothing except body can touch or be touched, and that there can be no understanding unless in a human shape, because he had never seen an intelligent creature in any other. And this I suspect lies at the bottom of all speculative atheism; for being constantly accustomed to the operations, and to seek for the causes of all phenomena in the qualities of matter, men cannot bring their imagination to depart from its customary track so far as to conceive any other power to operate,

This likewise makes it so extremely hard to distinguish between creation and composition, or change of form, between essence and existence, between the accession of quality and production of substance, because it has been always customary to apprehend things by their qualities, to give them new names when in assortment which they had not while separate, and esteem them different Beings from their constituent parts. This keeps men so little

acquainted with their real selves, and wherein their personality consists, because they have been constantly accustomed to denominate the person by the bodily appearance or the character, and because they never remember themselves existing without organs, therefore count the organs component parts of themselves.

Nevertheless custom has its uses, and those not inconsiderable, as well for thinking as acting; our surest reasonings proceed upon principles already known and never doubted of, some customary apprehensions must serve for the basis even of those discoveries which wean us from others; our knowledge of an immaterial agent springs from having constantly observed upon every close examination into the operations of matter, that it never begins nor increases an impulse, but only transmits precisely the same it had received from elsewhere.

Custom begets expertness and renders things easy which were difficult and irksome before; it gives us our erect posture, for nature made us prone like the beasts, and endows us with speech which one cannot suppose the first men learnt, nor can you teach your children by rule and grammar: it cements society, for nothing knits men so firmly together as a communion of usages, and if you know the customs of a country you may know where to find company, and how to join with them in their ways of proceeding; it is the retailer to dispense the useful imports of science among the vulgar, in whom many practices of Religion, of good polity, the management of their children, and measures of private prudence, are mere custom, though introduced originally by wisdom, extensive discernment, and mature deliberation; nor is there any merchant in knowledge of so universal correspondence as to import commodities of all kinds, but must still resort to the shop of general usage for some things, nor has a better reason to give for many of his proceedings, than because other people do the like: it multiplies engagements, and gives currency to the business of life, for most men would stand idle unless when some urgent desire is afloat, utterly at a loss how to dispose of themselves if there were not certain customary methods of employing their time. Though it influences by attraction without addressing to the reason, yet it always carries the presumption of reason on its side, for nobody would begin a pernicious or inconvenient custom; and sometimes it makes reason, for where there are several roads of equal length leading to the same place, the beaten is always the smoothest, the safest, and the most sociable.

But customs may become bad by an alteration of characters or circumstances, or may have been fallen into unthinkingly without sufficient information on the inconveniences attending them: therefore it is dangerous to contract such an attachment for old usages, as no experience nor consideration can loosen, for nothing ought to supersede the authority of reason when the judgments of it are clear: to follow any inferior guide implicitly is slavery, not discipline: but then we ought to be very sure of having a good warrant for the liberties taken with prevailing customs, for the burden of the proof lies strongly upon him that would impeach them; no man is justified in breaking them, because he does not see their expedience, nor unless he plainly sees a mischief attending them.

6. Rule operates as a motive of necessity to escape an evil or damage consequent upon the neglect of it, Custom as a motive of use for some real or imaginary expedience apprehended in it, and Fashion as a motive of honour being followed to raise our credit, or save us from discredit. There is a similitude between the three, they often rise from one another, and

grow into one another, and common language is not so exact as to prevent their being spoken of promiscuously; but if we make the distinction, those seem to be the proper marks for ascertaining it: for a man in a desolate island might form rules for his conduct, and fall into some customary methods of employing his time, but could never have any such thing as fashion.

The proper province of fashion lies in little matters, such as dress, furniture, diversions, equipage, disposition of houses and gardens, compliments, variations of language or of idioms, and the like, for which there is not provision made by the other two: therefore it has the greatest influence upon persons of much liberty and much leisure, or in hours of leisure upon high-days and holidays, at least in this country, where our artificers think nothing of it while busied at their work, but the French carpenter cannot saw his boards without a long pig-tail and ruffled shirt, nor calling to his fellow, Monsieur, have the goodness to reach me that file. It stands in lieu of all obligations with the ladies who tend a sick relation, take care of their children, go to church, and perform the most important duties, because what would people say? how strange and odd it would look if they were to omit them. Nor are some men behindhand with the fair sex in alleging for justification of what they do in preservation of their estates or maintenance of their rights, that otherwise they should be laughed at: as if there were no other grounds of conduct than the estimation of the world. In short, perhaps there is more honesty and good order produced among us by the fear of one another's censure, than of the divine judgments, the stings of conscience, or the reproaches of our own reason.

As fashion prevails by the desire of admiration and shame of discredit, it necessarily occasions perpetual fluctuations in matters of indifference, some taking up new modes to distinguish them from the vulgar, and the vulgar creeping after them as fast as they can, to put an end to that distinction by which they are mortified. So the contest rises upon much the same foundation with that between Pompey and Cæsar: the courtier cannot bear an equal, nor the citizen a superior; the country dame would have you ready to think she had lived in London all her life, and the town lady strives to make the difference so great you may see it a mile off.

Therefore the recommendation of a fashion is not that it is the prettiest, the neatest, the most commodious, or most useful, but the newest, and adopted by persons of highest rank in the place: nor does there need other recommendation, all others being virtually contained in that, for novelty and high example will make things beautiful and useful that were never esteemed so before, nor ever will be again when those causes cease.

How cumbersome, how ugly, how ridiculous do we think the ruffs and farthingales of former times! yet no doubt they were vastly pretty when in vogue, and our great grand-mothers could trip about as nimbly in them as our daughters can in their wide flat hoops, made, like the mercer's counter, to set off the silk rather than the wearer. The mothers choose their ornaments for the intrinsic value, a few diamonds of good water, or string of oriental pearl, were thought to outshine a multitude of tawdry trinkets; but now if there are any real jewels they must be overwhelmed with a profusion of false stones and silver flourishing, to be new set every two years; and the ears are often loaded with French paste, coloured glass, and other fantastic baubles. A few years ago the hoop could not be pretty unless it rose on each side in a camel's hump, so that the sleeves were

forced to be stiffened and made to stand up like a bantam's cock tail, that they might not hitch in the petticoat. One principal source of beauty is expression; but it is long since the beau, almost throttled in a large solitaire, and his hair strained tight to the bag, till ready to start from the temples, was thought to appear most charming under an expression of the utmost distress.

I was grievously mortified the other day on happening unthinkingly to produce ten pennyworth of half-pence out of my pockets in presence of a fine gentleman; he raised a violent outcry upon me for the absurdity of loading myself with such an enormous weight, and of such filthy metal that one could not touch without daubing one's fingers: now he always lugs about a swinging sword with him that weighs ten times as much as my half-pence, and has left an indelible mark of its neatness in a long sooty smudge upon the lining of my coach; but I durst not retort upon him, because I knew very well that fashion has a magical power to make anything light or heavy, cleanly or nasty, by a laugh or an exclamation.

Nor does fashion want the like power in other instances to change the qualities and appearances of things; we prefer dry veal because it is white, and adulterated bread for the like reason, taking for our support a withered kecks instead of the staff of life: we admire white ashes and stewed cucumbers that look as if they had been eaten once before, and garnish the rims of our dishes with dabs of chewed greens: boiled rabbits are trussed up to appear as frightful as possible, and made to resemble that terror of our childhood Raw neck and bloody bones. Our town houses are thought most commodious when the family is squeezed up in scanty closets for the sake of having a spacious hall at the entrance; and in the country we are forced to cut down our shady groves and arbours, that a visitor may have a full view of the house half a mile off; thus contriving for show in preference to use, and for momentary pleasures in prejudice of the more durable. Persons of no ear learn to die away in ecstacy at the charms of music they have been told is Italian: contradictions become elegance and propriety of language, for a thing may be excessively moderate, vastly little, monstrous pretty, wonderous common, prodigious natural, or devilish godly; and a lady last winter walking from the next street to see my Serena, told her she found the way she came along so dirty, that in one part it was absolutely impassable.

Nor are the learned exempt from the influence of fashion, for as that impels they read their Greek by its own accent, or by the Roman; and in reading Latin perpetually make false quantities, judging of the sound by the spelling, or what is more extraordinary by the signification, so that Cano pronounced exactly in the same manner shall nevertheless be a short sound when it signifies I sing, but a long when construed Grey headed: and on hearing the word Manus you cannot possibly measure the quantity by your ear, until you know from the context whether it was used for both hands or only one.

7. Yet is fashion not without its uses, and those no contemptible ones: it furnishes some persons with the whole employment of their time, thereby rescuing them from that most forlorn condition, the having absolutely nothing to do, and fills up the vacancies between other occupations for the rest of the world. How would the fine lady or the pretty gentleman dispose of themselves if it were not for the labours of the toilette, for auctions, or exhibitions, till three o'clock in the morning, and the duty of visits, the attendance at plays, routs, drums, or Ranelaghs, from seven in the

afternoon till one in the evening? and those engaged in any profession, employment, or science, might be at a loss for recreation in their intervals, if there were not methods in vogue ready marked out to their hand. Nay, perhaps we plodding folks might plod on to our mischief, like a hen that would sit till she starves herself, were we not forced off our nest by some necessary compliances with the mode.

Religion and considerate reason can determine only the main branches of our conduct, yet we must always be doing something, but should have no choice in matters left indifferent by them, if we had not the example and recommendation of the world to direct us. It is this influence that chiefly supplies desires, nourishes habits, constitutes elegance, and gives a relish for the ordinary employments it leads into. The men take direction from hence what books to read, the ladies in what works to employ their needle, and both to touch neither books nor needle when the prevailing mode of the time or place happens to run against them. The same test determines what shall be deemed an accomplishment, what game at cards or dice, or what exercise shall be agreeable.

Nor is it in our actions alone and likings of external objects that we drive with the stream, but the same impulse likewise guides the turns of expression and models the cast of imagination, as is evident from the taste and genius peculiar to different ages and countries, which cannot be owing to the soil or climate, nor any other cause than the prevalence of custom drawing those who consort together, into similar trains of thinking. Many order their household, breed up their children, regulate their expenses, and take their most important measures according to what they see done by others: so that this lies as a ready rule for multitudes who could not strike out any rules for themselves by their own reason and observation, but must else wander at hap-hazard or stagnate in uncertainty.

And it is the easier rule, because it operates by attraction rather than compulsion, not driving upon a disagreeable task, but raising a good opinion and liking of the practices it enjoins. In which circumstance I wish the rules of religion could be brought to resemble it, and we might be taught as recommended in Chap. XXVI. to serve God in contemplation of the benefits accruing therefrom, rather than of the mischiefs incurred by disobedience. But for such as think themselves able to form rules upon the reason of things by their own sagacity, still an attention to general practice is not superfluous, for the measures of conduct proper for the different occurrences in life are so various, that it is impossible for any man to trace them all to their foundations; but he that is qualified to lead upon one occasion, will find himself under a necessity of following upon others. Besides, as we live in society, common usage makes the reason in many cases, because without a regard to that, our several manners of proceeding would be so uncouth to one another that we could never join in intercourse either for mutual assistance or entertainment: therefore when people are attached to their own particular ways, you find it very difficult to transact any business, or partake in any diversion with them.

Were people never to consort unless when some business of importance brings them together, occasions of this sort happen so rarely, they would continue in a manner strangers to one another; but the rules of civility are the threads completing the junction of society begun by our mutual needs. The forms of good breeding and general topics of discourse, lying upon the level, of every capacity, enter us into conversation or serve to fill up the

vacancies of it, thereby furnish an opportunity for introducing matters of greater moment without solemnity, for discerning one another's characters, and lead into the knowledge of the world. They give a larger scope to good nature by preparing a beaten track wherein to exercise itself in trifles, for how well soever disposed, we should not know how to proceed in pleasing one another, if there were not certain methods of behaviour which custom has made agreeable to everybody.

8. The sages of old have ranked courtesy among the virtues, though the lowest of the number: nor is it only a virtue itself but introduces a small degree of many others. It first weans from boyish humours and sudden impulses of wantonness, reconciles to something of discipline and orderly deportment, curbs the eagerness of appetite, and inures to bear little constraints and self-denials; thus teaching some small rudiments of endurance and forbearance, which how small soever are yet a valuable acquisition, being one degree better than uncontrolled licentiousness. It creates a sensibility of approbation and censure more attentive to the rectitude of actions than to present pleasure or profit, as finding superior satisfaction in the consciousness of having acted right, a disposition rendering the mind susceptible of the sublimest virtues: and though the rule of rectitude be far from the most perfect, yet is it of no small benefit to such as have not a better, nor a useless monitor to such as have, for it has been constantly remarked, that those who affect an utter contempt of the world always fall into some fatal error or gross absurdity; for no man's judgment is so complete as to set him above learning any thing from his neighbours.

By preserving this regard to others it throws some check upon self-sufficiency, making men sensible of a mutual dependence; as it likewise draws them nearer to an idea of their intrinsic equality by the affability and condescension it recommends towards inferiors, and the voluntary respect and reverence, instead of servile dread and forced obeisance, towards superiors. For in despotic countries, where the arbitrary will of the powerful leaves no room for courtesy to interfere, the populace are scarce considered as human creatures, and the women treated as slaves or possessions, many times sold to the best bidder, as one would a horse or a picture.

If courtesy be the lowest of the virtues, politeness is the lowest of the sciences; yet a science it is, therefore well worthy the careful attention of such as are not qualified for any higher, as it will keep them to such observation and exercise of their judgment, as they are capable of making; nor is it below the regard of the most profound, so far as it can be prosecuted without interruption to things of greater moment, for it will make them more generally useful, abating the stiffness of the closet, and enabling them to accommodate their conceptions to the trains of thought and expressions current in the world. This science requires no great ingenuity nor laborious application; a desire to learn, and assiduity under the best masters, that is, the politest company, will suffice; for it is more to be catched by sympathy, than taught by instruction. It wants little previous preparation to qualify the scholar for making proficiency, for a man may be very well behaved without other learning than that gotten under a dancing-master to give an ease and grace to his motions: yet it admits of many grafts if there be capacity and inclination enough to cultivate them, which render a gentleman more accomplished, and afford him a larger scope wherein to exercise his politeness; such as music, painting, building, gardening, agriculture, manufactures, commerce, characters, customs and

manners foreign and domestic, poetry, wit and humour, criticism, together with such smattering of natural philosophy and the profounder sciences, as may serve to give a solidity, without clogging the ease or damping the liveliness of conversation: for good breeding is most fully exemplified when one appears to understand something of every thing, but it is not needful to pursue any thing to the bottom.

9. It would be a vain attempt in me to go about drawing a perfect character of politeness, a quality for which I never was famous myself, as being too much taken up with my speculations to pay those assiduities to the best masters which I have just now pronounced necessary for gaining the full and genuine completion of politeness: but as in a former place I have called it the skin and outside of virtue, and the skin always conforms itself to the lying of the solids beneath, the shape though not the colour seems to fall properly within my province; and how deficient soever in the practical part, I may still examine the principal foundations whereon the theory stands erected.

Politeness then I perceive may be styled the representative of charity, employed where she is absent, to execute her office in little matters: for charity, though principally driving at the solid good of our fellow-creatures, yet whenever opportunities for such service do not offer, she prompts to please, to oblige, and to gratify: for present pleasure is a good when not bringing on any subsequent mischief, and adds a mite to the stock of happiness. In this respect politeness imitates her, urging to the same works that she does, though not with the same view; for charity seeketh not her own, she proceeds directly upon a principle of good will to the party gratified; but politeness carries self in view, aiming at the credit of the performer, and to gain the good liking of those whom he converses with. Yet is it a considerable advantage to become habituated to works of virtue, though done upon another motive, because this will render the genuine virtue more easy to be acquired; for virtue has a natural beauty engaging to most men while held in contemplation alone, but when they come to the practice, it is the difficulty of breaking off their old courses that sets them against her, therefore if they can be previously led into the courses she recommends, this obstacle being removed, she will find an easy reception.

Nor is it unprecedented that men have been drawn insensibly by the practice of good breeding into a hearty benevolence of temper: and I believe it will not be doubted that in countries where civility and good manners prevail, there are more instances of true public spirit and disinterested kindness, than among the barbarous and uncultivated. I have before said that private affection is the proper avenue to Charity, and politeness helps considerably forward on the way: affection first draws us out of ourselves, but then it fixes our regards upon a few particular objects; whereas politeness, like charity, spreads them more diffusely, so that all objects indifferently presenting to the view, become qualified to attract them.

It is the rule of charity to love your neighbour, that is, every person who comes within the reach of your good offices; and it is the rule of politeness to make yourself agreeable to the company, whatever persons it happens to consist of. As the one covers a multitude of sins, so the other covers a multitude of defects: if there be any imperfection or deformity, any coarseness or inelegance of dress, gesture, or language, any mark of ignorance or peculiarity, any variance of sentiment, it overlooks them all, and strives to suit itself to the taste of those that are present.

Superior skill and ability, as all talents ought, are esteemed given for the benefit of others, and employed for the greater ease and entertainment of such as want them; so that imbecility of all kinds gives the larger title to deference and complaisance. The weaker sex, who in unpolished countries are considered as the property of the stronger, have by far the greater share both of the legislative and executive authority in the kingdom of fashion: they are likewise the depositaries and judges in matters relating to form and ceremony, so that the soldier, the scholar, the divine, and the metaphysician, unskilled in the niceties of ceremonial law, stand in awe of their decisions; as Hector dreaded the Troadas elkisepeplous, the Trojan ladies with their sweeping trains.

As politeness stands in the passage between affection and charity, it assumes the countenance of the former as well as of the latter; whoever makes one in the circle around you is to be treated as your particular friend; you are to rejoice in whatever has fallen out to his wishes, and sympathize with his displeasures, to be solicitous for the health and prosperity of his relations or intimates, and take his part against all that are absent, to express a predilection of his person, an esteem of his qualifications and deference to his judgment, or if keeping up the ball of discourse you may offer a variation of opinion, it must be done by way of suggestion in order only to obtain his determination. The polite man has no will of his own, but takes the pleasure of the company for the guidance of his motions: he is superior to pain, for if his tooth aches or shoe pinches him, he must not make wry faces, nor complain lest it gives other people uneasiness: he has the stoical apathy capable of making all things indifferent and submitting his humours to those of any body else; no perturbation, anxiety, nor eagerness, but possesses a calm, unruffled serenity, and proceeds with awakened ease which is the child of expertness not of indolence. If anything of contention be unavoidable, he shows a reluctance in entering upon it, manages it with tenderness and good manners, and never suffers you to think his esteem or good-will suspended for a moment. Upon proper occasions he can give advice without insulting, admonish of an indiscretion without displeasing, and rally without giving offence.

Assurance or courage is a necessary ingredient of politeness, for if people are satisfied you could do a rude thing if you had a mind but never have that mind in any single instance, your merit is greater with them, than if complaisance were forced from you by dread of their censures: for there is a difference between respect and servile fear, the one is amiable, the other contemptible. Some, who would be thought extremely well bred, how obsequiously soever they behave to everybody in their presence, make a practice of censuring, criticizing, and calumniating them as soon as their backs are turned: now with submission to the best mistresses in the science, this seems to me a defect of politeness; perhaps I may be misled by my notion of its similitude with charity, which hopeth all things, believeth all things, and thinketh no evil; but to my apprehension, the essence of politeness requiring a dispassionate temper, whatever betrays the marks of envy, rancour, animosity, ill-nature, or other intemperance of mind, must be inconsistent with it. One may indeed gratify the humours of the company by depreciating others, but then if they have any reflections they must see that the same talent will be turned against themselves another time; so they love you for a moment, but will be afraid of you ever after.

Therefore I conceive that the polite man who desires to raise a durable credit with the world, will not be forward to speak ill of anybody, but select

the bright spots of a character, and seek for extenuations in those parts which cannot entirely be defended; for by using to give everybody their due commendation, his civilities to persons present will appear to be sincerity and not mere compliment.

In former times there was a good deal of constraint in the modish ways of treating one another, people were forced to eat and drink more than they liked, and pressed to stay upon a visit longer than was agreeable, but now those nuisances are happily removed, and liberty is become the basis of our laws, as well of fashion as of the land; but liberty is best advanced by every one restraining himself in such fancies as must prove a restraint upon those of other persons, indulging those desires only which are compatible with theirs, and making it his principal desire to contrive and labour for their entertainment. Therefore where there is a number of thorough, well-bred persons joined in an expedition, I conceive it the truest miniature of an Utopian or paradisiacal state: things lie in common among them, there is no greediness, contention, or suspicion, no trouble is grudged for the general accommodation, and every one strives to make things as agreeable as possible to the rest.

10. But as there is no good thing in this world without its alloy, politeness, which we have seen of such excellent use to promote order, harmony, and enjoyment among mankind, produces its evil weeds copiously enough as well as its salutary fruits. I have said just now that it assumes the countenance of affection and charity, but too often carries the countenance only without an atom of the substance. It is become a proverb that the Spaniard often kisses the hands he wishes were cut off; and your very courtly people appear extremely obliging to persons they do not care a farthing for; nor does the affability of the well-bred always make them a whit the more candid to think well, or more inclined to wish well to others.

This proceeds from their taking the credit of politeness for their ultimate point of aim, pursuing it rather as a brilliant accomplishment, than as a valuable quality, which renders the reality superfluous, because credit must result from appearances, not from sincerity and heartiness which cannot be discerned. This accomplishment, as observed above, is an avenue to virtue, but he that has gone no further on his way, than just to enter the avenue, has made very little progress: it is well if he does not strike aside into the by-paths of error and mischief. The case here is much the same with that of Religion, where forms and ceremonies are the necessary avenues conducting into the substance: but it is well known what extravagances have been run into by those who mistake the form for the substance. As indiscreet headlong zeal has proved the source of superstition, censoriousness, animosity, and persecution, so an eagerness to be admired for the pink of politeness, has sometimes given occasion to a pernicious delicacy and refinements in vice, making men worse than they would have been by mere natural inclination; whence some have maintained that the polite arts have been a mischief to the world, because enormities abound in countries where they prevail, which are unknown among savages.

This may be owned without proving them a mischief, if their benefits greatly overbalance the abuses made of them; for the best things when corrupted turn into the worst, which does not destroy their value unless the corruption were to become general. We have seen in the last sections, of what excellent services an attention to politeness is capable when under the guidance of judgment, and directed to the advancement of virtue, but

when taken up for a first principle of action, when made an object of ambition, it produces direct contrary effects.

Instead of promoting charity, condescension, and a better sense of intrinsic equality, it generates contempt and loathing, and widens the difference between man and man, making the rude and vulgar regarded as an inferior species of creatures. It inspires with vanity and the desire of excelling instead of that of excellence, for things are not coveted for their intrinsic value or usefulness, but for their being elegant and modish. Persons under this influence disdain everything that is vulgar or does not distinguish them from the common herd; they perpetually vie with their equals and emulate their superiors: which gives them an utter aversion to trouble, to consideration, regularity, and discipline, as mean things fit only to keep the populace in order, and runs them into all fashionable follies, dissipation, and ruinous expenses.

The superfine gentleman must not put on his own clothes, look into his own estate, nor eat, nor talk, nor do anything like the bulk of mankind: he has no judgment of his own, but takes his measures of all kinds from the modish standard, and even chooses his diversions, not because he likes them, but because followed by the beau monde: he scorns application and seriousness, economy and justice to his tradesmen, because he sees them disregarded by persons of fashion, and would be ashamed to pursue a close train of thought or argumentation as being pedantic, but decides every thing at once by positiveness and exclamation: he cannot endure to be alone, because then having no opportunity of shining, but aims to sparkle in all companies even before his own servants, and is as proud of understanding all the punctualities and niceties of elegance, as Alexander was of conquering the world.

It has been observed in the last section, that politeness teaches to submit your own humours to those of the company; therefore so far may be deemed a species of useful self-denial; but then it affords no check upon their humours, so that when made the sole principle of action, it encourages the indulgence of every humour and folly wherein others will join, and you may even lead them into whatever fancy you please, so there be no constraint used, but you can make the thing agreeable to them. Thus the denial of private desires serves only to instigate and give a larger scope to the general.

Its object being to please and entertain, rather than to do a real benefit, it naturally fixes the attention upon little forms and modes of behaviour, which best answer its purpose; or if it urges to any learning or accomplishment, they are such only and to be cultivated so far, as may make a man more agreeable in conversation, not more serviceable to himself or others in life; as if the sole business of mankind were amusement. By this means things of moment and trifles are made to change their nature, great stress is laid upon the latter so as to engross the thoughts in contempt of the former: and a man is estimated not by his skill in any science or merit in his profession, but by his manners of entering a room, the fluency and liveliness of his discourse, and readiness in making a handsome compliment.

It is difficult to say where the legislative power in matters of fashion resides; the women, as said before, have a considerable share, but they do not proceed by session, deliberation, or council, so their statutes are many times fantastic and arbitrary; and if chance and whim have an influence anywhere, it must certainly be here. The admiration is carried on with

the utmost rigour of legal justice untempered by equity, no allowance made for mistake, or ignorance, or want of information, but whoever does not conform exactly to the letter of the law, is cried down as a brute. For though the thorough polite overlook all involuntary failings, there is always a set of people one may style the executioners of the law, who pretending to everything of politeness except an equitable temper, pass very severe judgment; for though the regulations change every year, it is the highest crime with them to be unacquainted with the several alterations as soon as made.

The wants of nature are soon satisfied, but men multiply wants to themselves by their inordinate desires; and if they can moderate their own desires within a reasonable compass, still the world will be perpetually urging them to new cravings, and imposing many things as necessary to keep up their appearance and estimation: if it could be computed how much we are forced to do for satisfying others which we should not choose of our own accord, perhaps it would be found that many of us pay higher taxes to the fashion than to the national supplies. Nor are we only controlled in our expenses but cramped in our liberty, much of our time and activity being disposed of at the will of others, and the necessary compliance with modes and ceremonies sometimes prove a grievous interruption to engagements we might have pursued with more satisfaction and emolument.

11. Since then we see so much good and evil flow from the same source, it will behove us to proceed with discretion, that we may avoid the one, and gather the other: but there is no making a choice while driven by the torrent and moving by impulse, nor unless we employ the current to carry us more commodiously to some certain mark we keep in our eye, for which purpose it will be necessary to consider the uses of politeness and what course it takes to arrive at them.

The uses I conceive are to make our time pass more pleasurably in those many intervals wherein there is no room for important services, to supply us with methods of exercising our charity in little matters, or enable us more easily to communicate the benefit of any improvements we have attained: and the course lies by making us agreeable to one another, and mutually indulgent to our desires. Upon this view it appears evident that politeness ought not to be taken up as an ultimate aim, but employed in subserviency to further ends, nor is complete without something more solid to give it a substance; for the art of communicating one's thoughts handsomely when one has nothing to communicate, is but a jingling plaything at best. Neither will a fondness for brilliancy help to steer in the right course, which is better pursued by striving to be agreeable, than to gain admiration: many think to show themselves polite by extraordinary elegances not to be paralleled elsewhere, but this is a deviation from the rule of politeness, as expressing a selfishness and desire of excelling not of gratifying others, who they may suppose cannot be well pleased at seeing themselves excelled and outdone.

But the polite man will take the real pleasure of others for the mark of direction whereby to steer his conduct: he will not think of self any further than to beware of things unbecoming, which might render him disgustful to them, nor will he do anything for show unless it be of his readiness to oblige, for this he may wish to show as being a prospect in its very nature soothing to the beholder. For the like reason he will neither be foremost or hindmost in the fashions, neither scrupulously exact nor carelessly deficient in forms and punctilios; for he will have so much respect for the

world and for persons with whom he converses, as never to express a contempt of them either by his singularity or by undertaking to surpass them. He will see that politeness, like charity, extends its verge to all ranks, though exerting itself in different manners, so that the low, the ill-bred, and the ignorant still are objects of its regard: therefore he will condescend and place himself upon the level with all, avoiding whatever might mortify or lay them under difficulties, yet without demeaning himself or stooping to things unsuitable with his character; for this would render him less amiable in the eyes of the world, by whose rules of decorum he will be guided, and not by a fondness for dignity, even in the bounds he sets to his condescension.

As there are various talents of all sorts and sizes among mankind, those whom nature or education have rendered unfit for anything else, do right in making it their business to study the modes; for any business is preferable to total indolence and inattention: but before they value themselves upon their proficiency, I would have them satisfied that they were utterly incapable of better employment. If this be their case they stand approved, as having performed the part allotted them, for nothing is insignificant in the hand of Providence; the butterfly, the goldfinch, the fiddler, and the beau have their several uses in this sublunary system, and he that does his best, how trifling soever it be, does all that was wanted from him.

We do not reckon our houses finished as soon as the mason and the carpenter have performed their part, but there still remains employment for the painter, the carver, the gilder, and the paper-hanger: nor is the condition of life complete when the uses of it are supplied, but something is still wanting to be done for embellishment and amusement; and in those seasons wherein no opportunity offers of promoting a solid benefit, entertainment and present pleasure is our business, which will then bear a reference to the grand intention. Therefore those innocents who stand in no situation to do any service in life, may deserve our applause if they contribute what they can to the cheerfulness and enjoyment of it; for this world is a stage, and it is not the importance of the part, but *the performing* it well that merits a plaudit.

Yet if there be any seeds of genius or application, they may be better bestowed in cultivating some of the polite arts than in matters of mere show, and form and fashion, still remembering that those arts serve only for embellishment and engagement of the time, therefore must not grow into a passion, nor be made an object of vanity, nor suffered to engross the thoughts from all prudential considerations. Such as have no judgment of their own, must take their measures solely upon what they see done by others; but with the best judgment there is still a deference due to the ways of the world, which deserves an authority, not a servile submission. We have seen in the last section how many mischiefs are endangered by driving impetuously with the impulse of fashion; therefore we must learn to stem the torrent, to dare to be singular, to bear the censures of the multitude: yet this need not abate our disposition to comply, but rather is a necessary foundation to support it, for compliance is not itself when forced, nor can subsist in a feeble, passive temper.

I have observed in a former place, that he who can never refuse a favour can scarce ever be said to grant one, for it is wrested from him, and not given; in like manner he that follows the mode because he cannot help it, can no more be said to comply, than a prisoner complies with a constable who carries him to gaol. Yet there is no need to resist for resistance' sake,

nor affect singularity merely to show our sturdiness, for occasions enow will offer wherein we shall find it expedient to judge for ourselves, and whenever such do not offer, non-compliance is a fault.

For the presumption lies strongly on the side of general practice, which therefore ought to prevail unless when the judgment clearly discerns an inconvenience therein: and even then the disposition to compliance ought not to abate, but always weigh in the scale, nor even fail to draw down the balance because become light in our estimation, but because overpowered by a greater weight. There is that deference due to the world and to the company, which requires to submit our particular humours to theirs, but not to submit our reason: and hence arises a difficulty in the commerce of the world, for humour so often assumes the garb and countenance of reason, that it is not easy to know them apart; therefore here a careful and thorough examination is requisite, that we may be very sure of having a sufficient warrant from the necessity or manifest expedience of the case, whenever we venture to move in an eccentric orb.

12. Rule, precedent, and mode supply the place of judgment, therefore are necessary for the direction of those who cannot trace the reasons of things themselves, and of all persons in such matters whereof they want experience or opportunities to form a judgment upon. They are the means whereby the judgment and experience of some become serviceable to many, and the principal channels through which the benefits of society are mutually communicated. It is by their aid that theory may be made practical, nor is speculation of any better avail than to strike out some salutary rule or manner of conduct, which is frequently the result of many observations and trials, correcting one another to accommodate it to a general use.

Therefore there is a reverence due to them not to be destroyed by any little defects; for as my Lord Coke says, the law will rather suffer an injury than an inconvenience, so it is better submit to a present inexpedience, than break through a prevailing usage convenient for the commerce of the world.

Mode and example are more efficacious and easier methods of conveying improvement than instruction, because there are more people that have senses than understanding, or that can follow your ways than enter into your reasonings: beside that the benefit you do will be likely to spread more diffusively, for he that imitates what he sees done may become an example to draw others after him, but it is not so easy for him to communicate the knowledge he has learned without dropping the greater part by the way. Add to this, that the influence of general practice lightens the work to the learner, rendering it scarce needful to use any efforts of his own; for it allures and assists him in the progress, it operates upon the machine by means of sympathy and the passions whose springs are stronger than those of the understanding, and will carry him on almost whether he will or no. Therefore we sometimes see persons who move always mechanically, without any consideration or vigour of mind to help themselves, yet led insensibly into a propriety of action and sentiment by having fallen among good company.

It were much to be wished, though little to be expected, that rules, customs, and modes for the common transactions of life might be introduced by discretion and mature judgment of their several uses, instead of sprouting up accidentally from a coincidence of passions and fancies, or the wanton humour of such as have the eyes of the multitude turned upon them: but then regard must be had to the passions and tempers of men, to what is

feasible rather than what is rigorously right, and they must be conducted into such ways as are passable by them without constraint or reluctance.

And I seem to perceive that use is more consulted in those matters by my contemporaries than in former times: but then it is a use that tends as often to mere convenience and entertainment, as to more solid advantage. Both these deserve a share of consideration in their proper places, yet where a practice can be brought into vogue that tends to encourage any profitable self-denial, any well-directed industry, any increase of harmony and mutual good will, or any improvement of the rational faculties, surely it ought to carry the preference

Some perhaps may fancy that if we had examples of what is right in every particular before our eyes which might draw us mechanically to follow them, there would be no place for private judgment, which derives its clearness from observation of the errors of others, and its strength from opposition to their perversities driving like a torrent upon us: but I conceive we should still find a use for our reason in applying the example we would imitate, to the particular circumstances of our own situation, for he that follows another blindfold, may plunge into a dirty hole the other steps over; and a use for our resolution in making continually fresh conquests over the frailties and passions of our nature, which can never be totally mastered. But there is no need to fear that we shall ever want employment for our understanding by having the paths of rectitude and propriety beaten out before us wherein we might be constantly led by our fellow travellers, without making our own observations upon the road; for there will always be so much of the casual and the fantastical in the ways of the world, as will find exercise enough for our reason and our resolution to guard us against the mischiefs of them.

Unless the ten righteous, several times spoken of before, should arise; for they we may suppose will make good use of those powerful engines by which imagination may be brought into any train, and made unknowingly to execute the works of reason: they will soon raise a credit by the importance, the regularity, the propriety, the easiness, the amiableness of their own deportment; and having gained the authority of leaders they will penetrate into the secret springs of human nature, discern the characters of mankind, and know what practices may most usefully be introduced among them. They will keep their ultimate end, the perfection and happiness of the species, constantly in view, and observe by what line of bearing everything may tend to promote it. Nor will they neglect matters of trifle, the common transactions and daily occurrences of life, as well knowing that these may be made remotely subservient to important uses.

They will prevail to fix the point of honour upon endeavours to advance the general good, and bring an unaffected charity to become the genuine mark of politeness; to make a just confidence in the protection of Providence, a prospect of futurity and unmistrustful hope in the divine goodness, be reputed fashionable sentiments; to cast a general disrepute upon all selfishness, indulgence, indolence, over delicacy, vanity, greediness, dread of pain, labour or self-denial, and lead men into a true sense of that nice but useful distinction between a desire of excellence, and a desire of excelling. Nor will they only employ the impulse of example and fashion for leading the world into courses of conduct without knowing their expedience, but inure them likewise to observe the benefits resulting therefrom, and search for the reasons making one manner of proceeding preferable to another. For they will apply their cares to rectify the reasonings as well

as actions of mankind, introducing methods for choosing the objects suited to their several capacities, and judging soundly according to the lights respectively afforded them; so that each man's improvement will be the fruits of his own industry and judgment, taking only the assistance of example to suggest materials for exercising them upon; and thus when all hands are brought to unite, the work of reformation may be expected to go on with a rapid progress.

13. In the mean while until such consummate masters appear, it will behove us imperfect creatures to keep an attentive eye upon the modes and practices current around us, not to take direction from thence for our own conduct and commerce with one another, but likewise to employ them as engines for bringing the rest of the world into a little better order: for we are all public persons stationed here not for ourselves alone, but to improve every opportunity that opens for working a benefit in any respect for others with whom we have intercourse.

But it will be said, we are not of consequence enough to strike out a mode or become a pattern for the generality to follow: this I am sensible of, and would have it never slip out of mind, that we may not take upon us more than is becoming, for then we shall never affect anything. It is the grand mistake of the well-intentioned to aim always at doing mighty matters; but true industry lies attentive to small profits whenever accruing.

A private man must not think of introducing new practices into vogue, nor giving a sudden check to those he dislikes; yet he may a little weaken the torrent he cannot stop, and add a trifle of briskness to the stream he did not set agoing. For customs prevail by degrees and subside by degrees, as individuals successively fall into them, or lay them aside, so that each has his proportionable share in the force that makes the stream; nor can it be foreseen what effect one man's perseverance may have to give it a general turn, at least his example may have an influence upon his family, his neighbours or his intimates, or by their means may sometimes extend elsewhere further than he could have imagined. Therefore let him not think himself so insignificant as to make it wholly indifferent with respect to other persons how he behaves, nor so important as to pretend an authority over them, to dictate, to rebuke, to censure, or stand in open defiance against them: for gentle bending will do more than force, nor need this bending be attempted avowedly by premeditated design, for a steady tenor of conduct pursued upon good foundations for a man's own convenience or good liking, will attract the courses of other persons to warp the same way, almost without their perceiving it.

By this means a man may enlarge his scheme of conduct and add many little strokes to fill up his plan of rectitude, so as scarce ever to stand idle or useless for want of some commendable aim to pursue. For his virtue will not be confined to arduous and burdensome tasks, but taught to tread the paths of pleasantness, and will find employment in his familiar conversations: so he will not think the time lost that is not spent in devotion or important services, while it can be bestowed in adding something to the good order, the decency, the convenience, or innocent enjoyment of those about him. He will seldom proceed solely by the impulse of pleasure, but for the most part find some good end whereto his pleasures may be made subservient, which he can reflect on afterwards as a profit gained; thus by continual practice, learning more and more the art of sanctifying his common actions in the intercourse of the world: for whatever makes a littl

profit, the best that the occasion would permit, will bear a reference to his great ultimate aim, the glory of God pursued by every accession of happiness among his creatures.

CHAP. XXX.

EDUCATION.

As much as a man may be counted by nature a reasonable creature, certain it is from constant experience that he is not born in possession of that faculty: Nature only furnishes the soil and sows the seeds whercout reason is to grow afterwards, in long process of time. The plant is not reckoned to show itself until seven years old, and then appears feeble and scarce perceptible; during the warmth of youth, it lies choked under the weeds of passion, appetite, whimsy, and inordinate desire, nor is believed to arrive at maturity until forty. But whether it shall ever come to full maturity at all, or what condition of health and vigour it shall then attain, depends as much upon cultivation, upon favourable circumstances, and upon fortune, as upon nature. Nay, the gifts of nature herself may be ranked among those of fortune: for it was chance to us at what time, in what country, and of what family we were born, what was the constitution and state of health of those from whom we derived our own, what intemperances, follies, and accidents our mothers have escaped which might have ruined our bodily or mental powers: and when come forth into the world, we lie at the mercy of nurses and servants by whose carelessness or giddiness we might have contracted diseases, or received hurts, the bad effects of which we could never have gotten over.

But when safe from these hazards with all our organs and faculties entire, still the degree of improvement to be made with them, depended upon the care or negligence, the prudence or indiscretion of our parents or tutors; nor upon that alone, but upon the examples before our eyes, the companions consorting with us, the incitements to good behaviour striking our notice, the temptations falling in our way, the secret turns our inclination happened to take, and a thousand external accidents which no prudence could foresee, no care nor judgment certainly provide or prevent. While under the government of others the danger is not so great or not so apparent, for what mischiefs have been contracted early may be generally, though not always, discovered and rectified by their authority and good management; but when the reins of liberty begin to be loosened, then is the critical time, for the latent seeds of evil weeds will then sprout vigourously, and others be received from quarters where the ground was well sheltered before. So that it is impossible to know certainly how a lad will prove, notwithstanding all the good governance that has been bestowed upon him; but some fond passion miscalled love, some ill-placed friendship, some extravagance or debauchery, some violent fancy or eagerness of pleasure may frustrate the best culture, and overturn the most promising hopes.

The years from sixteen to twenty-five may be reckoned the most important part of life, as determining the colour of all the rest: the time lost then can very rarely be retrieved by subsequent diligence, nor is there room

to expect any subsequent diligence, after a habit of idleness contracted then; but the manner of disposing that interval must decide whether the man shall be good for something or nothing, or what he shall be good for ever after: and the disposal depends principally upon himself; he may receive assistance from friends and parents, but it lies in his own breast what use he shall make of their assistance. In this important season which is to fix his fate as well in this as in the other world, what sure direction has he to carry him through the business of it? his passions are then most impetuous, the joy of new-gotten liberty urges him to throw off the restraint even of his own reason, or if he has a notion of reason, he lies liable to mistake the impulses of passion for its dictates, and think whatever he stands strongly inclined to demonstrably right: his judgment is crude, hasty, opinionated and obstinate, founded upon two or three favourite maxims as upon absolute certainty, which if they happen to lead the right way, it is rather an effect of good luck than of discernment.

Thus, how true soever it be that each man makes his own fortune in happiness, it is as true that the previous indulgence of fortune led him into the proper dispositions and methods for making it; and any one who will reflect impartially on the follies, the erroneous notions, and strong propensities of his youth, must think it almost a miracle that he has escaped the mischiefs of them so tolerably as he has done.

2. But fortune is but another name for providence, from whose disposition of causes all fortuitous events as well as the stated laws of nature flow; therefore to that origin is owing that we are what we are, as well in our moral character, as in our situation with respect to externals. For though we have undoubtedly a freedom of will and our actions follow precisely upon our volitions, yet we shall use our freedom according to the judgments and sentiments of our mind, derived to us from external causes not of our own procurement; so that we have as much reason to thank Heaven for any good deeds we have performed, as for the daily bread we eat.

Thus without entering into the subtilties of freewill, we may satisfy ourselves by experience of the world around us, and by contemplating the progress of the human faculties in their several stages of growth, that there is a certain line of life marked out to every man, not by a compulsive fate or predestination, but by the provision of causes, for furnishing him with those natural parts and subsequent acquirements, those ideas, habits, inclinations, and ways of thinking which shape the whole of his conduct. He is left in numberless instances to do as he pleases, but derives from prior sources the springs of action determining what he shall please to do in every one of them. Had he been otherwise constituted or instructed, beheld other examples, fallen into other company, met with other accidents of the disgustful or alluring kind, though his choice might still have been equally free, he would have made it in another manner.

From this consideration that nothing falls out either in the moral or natural world, either among the actions of man or of matter, without the permission or appointment of our Almighty Governor, arises a stumbling-block not presently to be gotten over, for we cannot easily reconcile ourselves to the thought of evil proceeding originally from the same fountain with good. But the ways of heaven are all established in perfect wisdom, goodness, and equity: therefore we may rest assured that whatever is evil, so far as we can see of it, terminates in some greater good, to us unseen: we can discern that vices often correct one another, and the miseries they

involve some persons in, serve for a warning to deter multitudes from incurring the like; so although a grievous hurt to particulars, they are a benefit to mankind in general, and we can understand them sent in mercy to those who profit, not in anger to those who suffer by them.

But the first fall of man and that proneness in human nature to offend, which renders a continual warning and an opposition of contrary vices necessary, cannot be thought permitted in kindness to the human species, therefore we must conclude them redounding to some necessary service of the universe, and that there are other creatures to whom the profits accruing therefrom are greater than any sufferings occasioned by them. This reflection may serve for a clue in the most mysterious dispensations of Providence, and afford us comfort under all the evils of sin and suffering we see in others, or have fallen into ourselves, being persuaded that all things are ordered ultimately for the best, and whatever yields nothing but mischief to man, tends by some unknown way to the advantage of the spiritual host, whose numbers are infinitely larger, and their interests more valuable than those of the visible creation. And as we have hope in the divine Equity of being ourselves incorporated into that host, though perhaps at a very remote distance of time, yet the remotest time will one day be the present, and we shall then find our happiness supported by the like dispensations among inferior creatures with those which afflict and gall us now

Yet such reflection can only furnish ground of content in what evils we cannot help, but none for being remiss in warding off those we can any ways avoid: Providence indeed, which is styled Chance in the language of men, disposes all things for the best; yet it is of the essence of prudence to leave as little to chance as possible: but prudence must take her measures, not upon what is best in the all-seeing eye which we can never know, but upon what appears so to our best discernment.

We have nothing to do with the line of causes lying behind, which brought us our knowledge, our sentiments and abilities; it is our business to look before, along the line of consequences which may result from our actions, and steer our course according to what we discover there. We have a certain compass of power and freedom allotted, and a portion of understanding to direct us in the proper uses to be made of them; but our understanding is of the provision of Heaven, therefore what good conduct flows from thence, may be presumed to promote the general interest of the universe, as well as what flows by any other channel: so that since we cannot certainly know in what instances our good or evil conduct will prove most beneficial to invisible creatures, it behoves us to pursue our own advantage, and that of our fellow-creatures with whom we have a visible intercourse, by such methods as our reason and those salutary rules which were the result of former reasonings shall direct; and the rather because, so far as we can judge, the doing good to any single member is the most likely way to increase the common stock and promote the good of the whole.

Therefore our contrivance and industry is due to the good of our neighbour, that is, any creature to whom we have a prospect of being able to do a service. The spiritual host lies too remote from our knowledge to stand in any degree of neighbourhood with us, so we have no care to take for their service, but may trust Providence to guide us unknowingly into the measures that shall best answer their occasions: but our concern lies with our own species, whose interests more or less general we may have opportunities of promoting. And since the introduction into life is made by helpless infancy, capable in great measure of being made the prelude to a

happy or miserable life, of being moulded into an useful or mischievous member of society according to the hands wherein it falls, therefore we ought to look upon our children and other other young persons under our management as the nearest of our neighbours, to whom our cares may be most usefully applied, as well for their own benefit, as that of the world wherein they are afterwards to bear a part.

3. Perhaps I shall be counted too speculative in recommending a thought to be had of our children even before their birth, but it is certainly of great importance to them in what manner we bring them into the world, and therefore deserves to be esteemed a matter of importance by us, if we can extend a regard beyond ourselves to those who are nearest, and ought to be dearest to us. Were this consideration duly attended to, it must put a check upon unlawful amours, which how much soever a sport to the parties engaged, may prove death, or what is worse than death, a miserable life, to the unhappy produce of them.

Nor let people fancy their offspring indebted to them for an entrance into being; for how know they by what laws the creation of souls, or introduction of them from some former state, are administered, or that the same soul would not have found an entrance by some other passage into a better station, where it would have had the full benefit of that parental affection and tenderness which now it is likely to miss of? For children drawn into the world through this by-way are looked upon as a burden, a shame, and a misfortune to their parents, often made away with, generally neglected, and very rarely find the due share of fondness and countenance needful in their helpless condition, and to which they are naturally entitled. There are those who think to excuse themselves in these pranks by pretending to follow the impulses of nature; but surely it is a strange way of following nature to do that which tends to choke the growth of all natural affection, a provision which Nature has rendered as necessary for the well-being of her infant productions, as the mother's milk for their sustenance; or rather more so, because if the milk fails, there are other ways of supplying its place by nurses and paps; but parental instinct is not to be bought with money, nor a succedaneum to be gotten that will answer the purpose effectually; for no man can have the same hearty tenderness for another's bastard as for his own children.

But suppose the father ever so strongly inclined to procure all advantages for his child, it is not in his power to do it completely, for to succeed therein he will want some assistance and countenance of other people, which he must not expect to find: he cannot introduce him among his friends, relations, nor acquaintance, nor teach him that useful science of the world which is only to be learned by experience and observation; he has not a continual opportunity of inspecting his conduct, but his cares of him must be taken by stealth or at a distance; in case of mortality he has nobody to trust who might prove a second father, for nobody will regard him as a friend or relation, entitled to any more than mere charity and compassion demand for a fellow-creature in distress; and with all his endavours he can never secure him from the discouragements and brow-beating of censorious and ill-natured persons. In short, let any man consider how he would like to have been born himself under such disadvantages, and then apply the golden rule to those who are to be of his own flesh and blood.

Nor is it enough to avoid the hazard of bringing them into the world in a manner that shall make them a shame to us; some little consideration

seems requisite of what other parent we give them upon whom their future health of body and mind is to depend jointly with ourselves. People choose solely for their own pleasure or convenience without a thought of their rising families, unless perhaps to provide a maintenance for them by settlements, and that not always; for our novel-hunters learn to despise all common prudence, under the notion of mercenary views; their fancy of circling joys which will never end makes them giddy, so that they can behold nothing calmly and steadily ever so little remote: an engaging person, a talent for diverting conversation, includes all merit with them, and constitutes the whole of happiness. But if they like to live in a hollow tree themselves, or could be sure they shall like it as well ten years hence as they do now, will their children be happy by being born in one, and having nothing but the slender bark and barren leaves for their shelter and support? It is surely of concern to them that both parents should have some discretion, considerateness, knowledge, and abilities capable of discerning other objects beyond the circling joys; and there should be a harmony and mutual esteem between the families on both sides: for all these things will have a share of influence in determining the colour of their lives.

But happiness is made up of many ingredients, requiring forethought to provide for them, and if any principal ingredient be wanting, it will render all the rest of no avail; therefore it is a cruelty, or at best an unpardonable negligence, when people entail diseases, distemperature of brain, weakness, or poverty upon their offspring by unsuitable matches, or provide them with a parent who knows nothing but trifling dissipation and amusement, incapable of steadiness or consideration, or of helping them either by instruction or example. This is sacrificing their children to their own fond fancy, or the glare of riches and splendour, whichever of the two idols happens to possess their imagination

I know one cannot hope to have things at all points exactly to our wish, but must do the best that is feasible; therefore shall not dictate how far the interests of the parties themselves are to give way to those of their children yet unborn, which must be left to every one's own judgment upon the circumstances of his case: I only say the latter ought not to be so totally overlooked as too commonly is done, especially by very young persons, but deserves admittance into the scale of consideration, and to have its due weight in determining the choice. And if such weight has been given in making the connection, I presume it will not cease to operate afterwards during the time of gestation: but the mother will abstain from such intemperances, diversions, and hazards, as might prove hurtful to the burden she bears, preserving such a steadiness and sobriety of temper as may secure her against frights and longings; and the father will strive to ward off whatever might excite any turbulent passions, or urge to any improper exercises which would disturb the vegetation of the growing plant, or vitiate its juices.

4. But all that could be urged upon these topics is scarce likely to be much heeded, or prevail on any to forego a fond passion or favourite desire, which has nothing more than self for its object: therefore I shall suppose the children already come into Being, and then it may be presumed there will be a motion of instinct towards them; but it is very material whether this principle be left to operate at random, solely by its own impulses, or guided by judgment and discretion.

If due consideration be had, they will not be regarded merely as play things for the parents to divert themselves with, or show about among their friends and visitors to remark how tall, how lusty, and how lively they are

but as an important charge committed to our hands, as our nearest neighbours whose fortune in this world and the next depends upon our management, which therefore deserves to be esteemed a serious affair, and be made the object of our constant attention. For the constancy of the application is of more consequence than the vehemence of it, as a little negligence or indiscretion will overthrow the good effects of many cares. People are apt to be prodigiously anxious for their children by starts, just when it comes strongly into their heads, and then think no more of them for long intervals afterwards. In their serious moods they collect treatises of education, in hopes to find a secret there for becoming excellent managers by the bare perusal: but these aids at most can only direct them in some particulars how to apply their industry, but can never infuse it: they must draw this principle from their own fund, and have gotten an habitual diligence before they become qualified to reap any benefit from the observations suggested to them. It is not a set of rules, how complete soever, but a steady vigilance and readiness to seize every opportunity of practising them, that must do the work: where there is the latter, it will go a great way towards supplying deficiencies in the former, for we see people with very little knowledge or judgment succeed well enough for common use by an assiduous application of such judgment as they have, and there are many more errors committed in the world through negligence than ignorance.

I know very well the nursery cannot and ought not to engross all our time, for though our nearest neighbours reside there, we have other neighbours beside to whom a proportionable share of our regard is due: but those who are nearest deserve to be foremost in our thoughts, and that there be no want of attention by which they might suffer. The business of a profession, the duties of our station, and other necessary avocations must be complied with, and therefore may be allowed to abate something from our assiduities to home concerns; but the latter clearly claim the preference before matters of mere amusement, diversion, and self-indulgence: which therefore ought to be pursued only so far as can be done without detriment to them.

Yet self-indulgence is not the only danger to be guarded against, the fondness which first attaches us so strongly to our own humours, when transferred upon the little ones, may do them infinite mischief: those nearest neighbours certainly deserve to be loved as ourselves, but it has been shown in a former place that whoever loves himself improperly does no kindness to another by loving him in the same manner, and may offend grossly against the law of charity by doing as he would be done by. If we neglect our own interests to gratify some present fond desire, it is folly; if we do the like by our children, it is injustice and cruelty: for nature has given them no knowledge of their own, but entrusted them to our judgment: if therefore we refuse them the full benefit they might receive therefrom, we betray our trust.

Tenderness we cannot have too much, provided it be under the control of reason; and this may incline us to procure them all the pleasure and ease consistent with their good, but never give way to a present indulgence that may be attended with mischievous or dangerous consequences. I have heard people value themselves upon their inability to resist an opportunity they know to be hurtful: but if this be excusable from the weakness of human nature, certainly it is not matter of glorifying, they ought to be ashamed of it, and strive to mend it as soon as possible: for they know not how severely their darlings may rue for the delay.

But fondness is generally accompanied with an anxiety that magnifies dangers, and renders them an obstacle against measures we should otherwise judge expedient; but there is a fortitude requisite in our dealings with those under our care as well as in our personal concerns, and this is surest founded upon the contemplation of Providence. We know that children are the gift of God, not given for our sakes alone, for they bear their part in the general system, and must undergo whatever fate the interest of the whole shall require: therefore we must not think to have them exempt from accidents, but prepare to rest contented under whatever shall befall, as being well satisfied that the most mysterious dispensations are ordered in perfect wisdom for the best. Nevertheless, it behoves us to take all the caution we can against accidents, nor ever to hazard them wantonly, and then we may rest assured that however unfavourable the event may appear, it will turn out in the end to some unknown benefit both of ourselves, and of those on whom our cares were bestowed. Nor are they liable to external chances alone, but likewise to suffer many by slips and failures in ourselves; with all our resolution to the contrary, we shall sometimes be negligent, remiss in our cares, and wholly taken up in gratifying our own passions and fancies: it is better we should be apprized of our infirmity beforehand, for then we shall be less mortified and disheartened when mistakes do happen, and shall stand more upon the watch to prevent them. For confidence begets carelessness, and he that is too sure of succeeding in any work completely, commonly fails in the performance through that very security.

5. But though a steady industry and vigilance be the principal things, they will yield more profitable fruits according as directed by better judgment and information, which being derivable from many quarters, every one may be allowed to add what lights he can to the common stock for the chance of making the road clearer in some of its bearings. There have been too many and too masterly systems of education already compiled, for me to make any improvement upon them; yet since old things repeated in a different manner may sometimes obtain a reconsideration after having been neglected, I may attempt to remind people of what they had overlooked or forgotten, without pretending to instruct them in what they do not know. Nor do I purpose to deal so much in rules and maxims, as in suggesting the particular aims to be had in view in the application of our cares; for having used myself as far as possible to proceed by reason rather than by rule, and seeming to have found benefit in this practice, it is natural to recommend to others what has proved beneficial to myself.

And I cannot help thinking that if the proper point of intention to be pursued upon every occasion could be discerned and borne in mind, common sense would seldom fail of directing to the proper measures for attaining it: for it is easier to see what would prevent the growth of slothfulness, intemperance, impetuosity, and squeamish delicacy, than to remember or be fully sensible of the mischiefs of those evil habits.

In order to proceed with regularity and effect, it will be requisite to have something of a plan containing an ultimate end to be proposed, together with the subordinate aims conducting thereto: the end to be steadily adhered to throughout, but the conducting lines will admit of continual additions and alterations to be made occasionally according as there is room for any improvement, or some mischief to be remedied, or some danger to be guarded against. But I conceive, a great deal depends upon the aim and expectations with which parents set out at first. which they generally

fix by much too high, yet cannot depart from until some grievous disappointment quite disconcerts, and throws them out of any aim at all. People are apt to think their children nonpariels, the sole object deserving admiration and regard, and depend upon their parts and their own sagacity for making them something extraordinary and supereminent above their equals, expecting that all things and all persons should ply to their interests and desires. By this means they miss of many advantages that might have been procured for them, as being deemed below their notice, and teach them to be selfish, conceited, unreasonable, impatient of contradiction, and fretful under disappointments.

Whereas if every man would consider that other people have their interests and desires as well as he, together with an equal right to pursue them, and believe it possible that some in the world may have apter subjects to work upon together with better skill and management to improve them than himself, he would be then more likely to discern what is attainable in this general competition, and apply his endeavours thereto without wasting them upon what is not so. For happiness, the proper ultimate aim of all our schemes, does not lie in comparison, nor is the value of it at all altered by another's possessing more or less: whoever thinks to engross it to himself and his own family will find himself defeated; he may succeed better by aiming attentively at such share of the blessings poured out among mankind as the courses of Providence shall from time to time bring within his reach. Therefore the solid happiness of our offspring in the enjoyments of this life, and due preparation for the next, ought to be made our ultimate aim, by the tendency whereto all our other desires for them ought to be regulated: we may laudably wish them all the good we can reasonably imagine such, but we need not wish all others to fall inferior to them therein, for that has no tendency to their benefit; for as has been shown in a former place, God has so interwoven the interests of mankind, that every one has a personal concern in the happiness of every other, nor can any be completely happy until all are so, and each man makes his own advantages more effectually, in proportion as he can contribute to those of his fellow-creatures.

Hence it appears, that to make a child useful is the ready way to make him happy, nor can the one be totally disregarded without failing of the other: therefore one part of our ultimate end to be held constantly in view ought to be the training him in such manner as may render him serviceable to the world, either by helping forward the important uses, or adding to the conveniences, or at least the entertainment of others, according as he is qualified and situated; and even in those many points relative only to his own profit or enjoyment, yet prudence will require us to pursue them so as may render them compatible with those of other persons; for if we think to gain an advantage for him by ways that must prove detrimental to the rest of mankind, we can never hope to succeed; or if we should, the success will be fatal, as drawing grievous mischief after it.

A selfish, encroaching, overreaching temper, suspicion, cunning, and dissimulation are sometimes inculcated through a mistaken policy, because at first sight seeming eminently beneficial to the possessor; but since such qualities must be troublesome and hurtful to whomsoever he has to deal with, they will turn out to his own great damage in the long run.

So that besides a conformity to the usages and characters around us to be regarded for our own sakes that we may know how to steer safely and wisely among them, it is necessary likewise to have an eye upon the con

formity of interests among mankind, that we may lay our schemes as much as possible in pursuing our own, so as not to clash or interfere with those of anyboby else; not considering our families as distinct and separate bodies, but as members of the community whereto we belong, coparceners of the blessings distributed among the whole, and entitled to the best we can procure for them without prejudice to the rights of other claimants for so much as they can attain for themselves.

6. Now to obtain our end it is obvious that care must be had both of the body and of the mind, each in its due proportion to be nourished up to the highest perfection the materials nature has put into our hands are capable of, neither of them to be neglected through an injudicious fondness for improving the other: for a constitution enfeebled by intense labour of thought, or an exuberant health without any judgment to guide it, will never make either a happy or a useful man.

As for the growth and health of the body, I shall not attempt to give directions thereupon, as being a matter whereof I have no skill; nor do I apprehend any great skill is wanted for private persons: if there are any natural defects, or weakness, or diseases, recourse may be had to the gentlemen of the faculty; and if there are not, the parents themselves will be sufficiently directed by their own sagacity, or the information of their own friends and acquaintance, to the proper courses of management, so they be careful to pursue them; therefore instruction is not so needful here, as admonition. They may please then to remember that the vigour and abilities of manhood is the object whereto they are continually to have respect: it is not enough to consult the present ease and accommodations of the child, to keep it plump in good liking and lively, but attention is likewise due to all methods that may strengthen the constitution, purify the blood, render the joints supple, and give it a dexterity in the use of all its limbs and organs of speech; that no ligatures be suffered to retard the circulation, nor shoes to pinch the feet, nor anything done or admitted by which it may grow lumpish, distorted, or feeble, or be otherwise impaired to its future detriment or uneasiness.

But health and vigour cannot yield their full benefits in a tender, delicate constitution, therefore it is of great advantage to any person to have been brought up in hardiness from his childhood; for this quality depends almost entirely upon custom, which the earlier it is begun, the easier and completer it will be acquired. If we reflect how much we suffer from winds and weathers, how much more liberty a man has and greater choice of employments and pleasures who can take up cheerfully with bad accommodations, and thrive upon any diet, we must acknowledge it a desirable thing to be able to do the like: and there are examples enow in the world that show to what degree of hardiness human nature is capable of being trained.

I do not expect that any among those who may be likely to give me the perusal will be able to breed up their children to the hardiness of a porter or highlander, nor if they were able is it fitting they should, because to do this they must inure them to a low and laborious way of living, unsuitable to the station they are to occupy hereafter, and neglect the accomplishments necessary to acquit themselves well therein; especially the girls, in whom a want of complexion and softness of limbs might hinder their advancement. Yet it may considered that the greatest degree of hardiness is a thing valuable in itself, and well worth the having if it could be attained without inconveniences in other respects; and whoever bears this reflection

in mind will be fond of gaining so much of it, as can be done consistently with those other respects, watching all opportunities of improving it that are practicable, or convenient in the condition of life wherein he stands.

But the greatest of all absurdities is that of teaching a child to value himself upon his tenderness and delicacy; this is making a glory of imperfections, which he will naturally be prompted to increase by such instigation: for though in many cases they are excusable, either from defect of constitution, or the manner of living one has been necessarily accustomed to in compliance with the company one has consorted amongst, still they are imperfections. Therefore if a man cannot bear the least fatigue or hardship, nor rest a moment easy without all his conveniences and elegancies about him, though I should not presently think the worse of him upon that account, any more than I should for a broken leg or want of an eye: yet I should think it better and happier for him if he could be delivered from those weaknesses, which good nature and politeness may overlook, but folly alone can take for topics of admiration.

But there is a moderation in all things, which will restrain from forcing lads upon things beyond their natural strength, or dangers to their health: this caution is not much wanted for parents who generally transgress the other way, but young people have sometimes destroyed themselves by violent exercises, and the notion that nothing will hurt them; they are commonly led into these dangers by their eagerness in pursuit of something striking strongly upon their fancy, which urges them to trials far beyond any they have experienced before; nor considering that sturdiness is to be acquired gradually by an habitual practice of the methods conducive thereto, and not to be gotten at once by sudden starts whenever they have a present occasion for it. Nor is it a needless caution to time the exercise of those methods rightly, which are then most beneficial when the body is in perfect health; people sometimes when taken with some disorder or feverishness will needs just then resolve upon being stout, and doing as they did at other times, but this is fool-hardiness not bravery, which is ever consistent with discretion, and watches the proper seasons for exerting itself, nor will strive against nature when she demands an indulgence, that will take the better effect in recruiting her forces, the less she has been used to it while not wanted.

7. And to lessen the hazards of damage to the health, it will be very material that no fund of mischief be laid in by intemperance; for when the blood abounds in humours and foulnesses, they are easily thrown off upon some of the nobler parts where they may prove fatal; but when the juices are pure and the circulation free, if some over-fatigue, or cold, or external accident should happen to raise a disorder, nature will soon work it off again without much trouble. She has given us appetite both for our sustenance and entertainment; the business is to preserve appetite in that genuine state wherein she gave it, for then it will answer both purposes most effectually: but there are a thousand causes continually surrounding us from our infancy which tend to pervert and vitiate appetite by grafting unnatural cravings upon it.

When children cut their teeth, the uneasiness of the gums urges them to put everything into their mouths; whatever they can lick or mumble from thence they swallow, especially if it have any sweet, or salt, or piquant taste that amuses them. As soon as they can run about, people are continually cramming them with cakes and sugar-plums; when at school, the example of their companions prompts them to get all the pies, and fruit, and trash

they can lay hands on; and when they come into the world, the world is perpetually labouring by its sympathy, by its fashions, and its exhortations, to extend appetite beyond its natural compass: it is made a genteel accomplishment to have a taste for elegances, curiosities, and dainties; variety of all kinds, the tricks of cookery, dishes of tempting fruit, and different wines, made obligatory by the jovial custom of toasts, are applied at and after meals to stimulate to excess, and even between meals people think they cannot enjoy one another's company without something to eat or drink.

I am not for breaking through prevailing customs as being a vain and unwarrantable attempt; on the contrary, I have before laid down compliance as a virtue, and recommended a conformity with the world we live in as a principal object to be had in view in forming our schemes; therefore I would not wish any man to resolve upon never eating but when he is hungry, nor taking a bit more than nature requires; for as the world goes, and as he himself has been accustomed, he would by so doing lose more than half the comforts of society, and half the pleasures of life. My purpose is only to remind parents of the dangers hanging over their children from the cradle, that they may use their vigilance to guard against the mischiefs of them from the very first, to beware of laying temptations in their way, to inculcate a love of sobriety as a valuable quality, to make a point of honour in having the command of their cravings, and to teach them the difference between compliance and feebleness of temper, drawn any way by the slightest attraction without consent of the will.

I know it is impossible to keep appetite from ever transgressing bounds, and therefore there is the more need of care and contrivance to restrain it within bounds so far as is practicable, that it may never make excursions of itself beyond what the due compliance with modes and customs have rendered unavoidable. It seems a desirable thing if it were feasible to find playthings or other amusements for children, but never give them anything to eat merely by way of entertainment when not wanted for their support or health: one must not expect this regimen can be followed rigorously, but it will be prudent to approach as near to it, and deal out those amusements of the taste as sparingly as possible.

I have indeed said just now, that nature gives us appetite for our entertainment as well as for our sustenance; and when we reflect on the continual return of her calls three times every day, it will be found that no inconsiderable part in the enjoyment of life consists in eating; but to have it a real entertainment we must not take pains to make it such, for there is no sauce like hunger, and whatever contrivances we practise to supply its place lose us more pleasure than they give. Pleasure shows her coquetish disposition more in this article than any other; while we remain indifferent to her she will court us daily of her own accord, but if we betray an eagerness for her favours, she will turn her back upon us, and allow us no more of them than we can extort from her by arts and contrivances, which must be perpetually varied to obtain even a momentary delight. Nor will she suffer us to return without much difficulty to our former tranquil state, for people by frequent cramming stretch their stomach beyond its natural tone which then will crave more than it can digest; so that if afterwards they would learn moderation, they cannot, but still eat too much without knowing it, because having corrupted that guide which ought to set the bounds, they have no rule to ascertain when the call of nature is satisfied.

8. There is likewise an intemperance of sleep very necessary to be guarded against, because extremely apt to creep upon young people espe-

cially in this cold climate where it gives a smart pain to jump out of a warm bed into the winter air: therefore this is a piece of hardiness which cannot be inculcated too early by all the means conducive thereto, whether advice, injunction, or shame. While under the eye of parents and masters, they may be kept constantly to a certain hour, which will make it the easier for them to persevere afterwards, when gotten from under that control: if no disorder or accident intervene, they will need no more than one nap which custom will have brought to terminate of itself just at the usual hour; and then if they turn upon the other ear to take a second, they should be taught to look upon it as an intemperance, not at all redounding to their credit. But this second nap is not so bad as lying awake, than which nothing tends more to foul the blood, to sharpen the juices, to exhaust the spirits, to unbrace the solids, to heat the blood, to stupefy the understanding, to destroy hardiness and produce other inconveniences of very mischievous consequence. Let them seek their amusements elsewhere, but reserve the bed as a place appropriated to sleep and sickness: for if it were possible to live without either of those suspensions of the enjoyments in life, nobody would ever think of making a bed a part of his furniture.

A regularity of hours, so far as is practicable, deserves adherence in this article, and so it does in the article of eating, and all other calls of Nature, who may be gently bent into any course by Custom, her second self, but cannot be suddenly put out of the ways she has been inured to, without great stress upon her forces and hazard of impairing them, nor can she move so vigorously and easily as when having some steady course to proceed in: for the human machine, as well as a watch, will be spoiled by perpetually setting forwards and backwards, by hurrying on, or stopping, or disturbing its movements.

I know there are some professions which require a frequent departure from rules, and every man may sometimes find occasions wherein it will be expedient and necessary to deviate a little; therefore where there is anything of this sort in view, it will be prudent to prepare nature for such deviations by practising them beforehand, that she may receive the less shock from them when they become necessary. For a pliancy to necessity and expedience is both commendable and profitable, nor would I have a man so hedged into his own ways, that he should be unable to stir an inch to the right or left upon any consideration; but though he may be ready to make an excursion upon good reason, he need never suffer himself to be put out of his course by any humour, or carelessness, or indolence, but adhere steadily to it so far as his station in life, and the circumstances of his situation, shall render feasible and convenient.

But it will be very difficult to get a man from his pillow till he is quite tired of it, if he has nothing to do when he is up; for he will be apt to think that if he must be idle, he may as well be idle a-bed as elsewhere; I do not say this is a good reason, but it will certainly weigh as such: thus Sloth is the child of Idleness, continually nourished by it, and would die away of itself if the latter could be removed. Therefore it would be of great benefit to young people to contrive if possible, that they should always have some employment to turn to immediately upon rising, some task enjoined, which if they despatch early they shall have the more time allowed them afterwards for their own amusements; or, which is better, something to their liking that they may apply to with pleasure, and will start foremost in their thoughts as soon as awake. For where inclination can be pressed

into the service, it will do its business more effectually than fear or authority, and will continue to operate afterwards when they are gotten from under the verge of authority; for having experienced the benefit of this management, they may be induced to practise the like upon themselves, and choose something every night for which they find an eagerness, either work or diversion, sometimes one and sometimes the other, for the first morning employment.

Nor is it enough to restrain sleep within due bounds, if the waking hours be suffered to dream away in a torpid indolence not much different from sleep: it is of great service even to the health to cultivate a spirit of activity, continually exerting itself in some exercise, either of body or mind. The former is more necessary for the animal machine, and for that reason deserves to be particularly regarded for such as are destined to follow some sedentary profession, that they may be inured by early custom never to sit still with their hands before them in the intervals of business, but to move briskly in their common actions, and daily to practise such recreations as may keep the circulation to its proper flow, and prevent ill humours from gathering in the blood.

Yet an activity of mind too is not useless to the body, there being such an intimate connection between the grosser and finer organizations, that irregularities in the one will not fail to produce their like in the other: there are some who love to sit in a corner, building castles in the air, musing upon improbabilities soothing to their fancy, and wishes of what can never happen, or perhaps upon something that has vexed them, or the imaginary dread of mischiefs never likely to befall; though this may seem an intenseness of thought wherein the mind is rather too busy than too remiss, it is in reality not an activity, but passiveness bound down to an object rising mechanically in the imagination. Tempers of this cast have a perpetual listlessness and dilatoriness: they apply to nothing readily, they do nothing currently, but want to put off everything another minute, even their meals, their diversions, and their beloved nightly repose. Such stagnation of thought, become habitual, must inevitably introduce a like stagnation of the vital juices, fret and waste the spirits, generate fearfulness and melancholy, and impair the health more than will easily be imagined.

This mischief then deserves an early attention to obviate, the more because difficult to be discovered in its beginnings, for we cannot penetrate into the thoughts to see what passes there: but before grown inveterate, it will show itself in the actions, or rather in the inertness of disposition, and then no time should be lost to cure it, nor any means omitted that can be devised to teach children to find an issue for their thoughts by running them in current trains, and to take pleasure in making good despatch of everything, as well in their tasks as their amusements.

Nevertheless it must not be forgot, that there is a contrary extreme, which urges to make more haste than good speed, a continual hurry and agitation never satisfied but when in motion, an impatience to do things before the proper time, and eagerness to despatch them at once by a violent exertion, an over-solicitude for the success of measures, and a vexation upon any rub happening to fall in their way. This temper likewise is unfavourable to the health, for mischief will ensue upon precipitating the circulation of blood and animal spirits, as well as upon retarding it; a calm and steady alertness flowing in one uniform tenor, always brisk and lively, never anxious nor trepidating, is the desirable point to be pursued. Therefore we must so labour to cure one evil as not to incur another, and keep

an eye upon Scylla while we endeavour to steer clear of Charybdis. I know it is a difficult matter, perhaps impossible, to hit exactly the golden mean, but we shall come the nearer by being apprised of the dangers on either hand; though I think the former is the greater, the more frequently fallen into, and harder to be cured. The best can be done must be by diligence in watching the approaches of either, and applying the proper remedy as soon as they are perceived.

9. Thus much for the body, which in earliest infancy requires more attention than the mind; but the latter will soon demand a preference, and may be begun upon even in the first year of life, by helping the little faculties to open, and laying the foundation of that most valuable quality which will stand them in stead ever after, I mean, a pliancy of desire. For children naturally cry for what they want, but it is of greater importance than nurses and mothers are willing to own, to let them never extort anything by this means, yet not to refuse them roughly or with an angry countenance, but smiling and amusing them with something else, sometimes even taking away their playthings in like manner; for this practice will save them a great deal of trouble at other times, when they happen, as they frefrequently will do, to catch up things that would hurt them, which then you must take away: for discipline cannot be begun too early, provided it be done gently, but steadily, without intervals of remissness.

The same reason will direct to prevent the constant presence of their nurses from becoming necessary to them, that they may bear at any time to see them go out of the room and be left contentedly in other people's hands, more especially your own; for you cannot be too early in gaining their acquaintance and liking, of which you may make excellent use for their benefit. If little hurts or dangers befall, never set up an outcry, for that will frighten them, but try to jest it off, for though they cannot enter into your jest, they will be kept in humour by the pleasantness of your looks and gestures. When in pain with their teeth or otherwise, give them all the relief and ease you can, but do not bemoan them nor put on a disconsolate woful countenance, which would teach them to double the evil by grieving it; sympathy catches sooner than commonly taken notice of, and indeed is the only language intelligible to children, therefore you had need be very cautious what ideas you convey by this channel: as pains and troubles accompany every state of life, it is of great advantage for the infant mind to be inured to bear them easily.

Playthings will be readily admitted, because everybody sees they divert the child, but present amusement is not the sole object I would have in view; wherefore I should choose such as have some movements belonging to them, will take to pieces, and bear being banged about without breaking: for they will serve best to exercise their little limbs and sagacity, which you may assist by gradually showing him how to manage them in proportion as he is capable of imitating you. Nor need you always resort to the shops for materials, a little hammer, a coffee-mill, or the bell-trigger will do to show him how they are to be used, or your penknife sheath for him to pull open and shut again. I have sometimes tried to throw a napkin over their heads, thrust a plaything into their sleeve, or put them under some little difficulty from which they can extricate themselves: the women always interpose immediately upon those occasions, which I conceive tends to make the child helpless, and dependent upon others for its relief in every trifling instance; but my view is to teach him to help himself, and struggle with difficulties of which he will meet with numbers when he comes into the wide world: but

then care must be taken not to tease him in these experiments, which therefore I would never suffer to be practised upon him by other children, if there are any bigger in the house.

You may likewise lay him upon the ground to sprawl about as he can; if you are afraid of daubing his frock, you may spread a sheet for him to crawl upon, and if that be too fine to touch the filthy carpet you may lay a coarser between: when he is tired do not take him up instantly, but let him wait till the second or third call. Many little devices may be thought of to put him upon striving for himself and acquiring a dexterity in the use of his hands and his feet, nor would it perhaps be useless if he were taught to make a variety of noises instead of squalling perpetually in the same note, as this might give him a better command over the muscles of his mouth when he comes to learn articulate sounds, and help to prevent lisping, stammering, and other such like imperfections: for every organ of the machine, the earlier and more various play it is inured to, the more pliant it will be, and the easier to be managed.

10. When the child can run alone, and prattle, the faculties begin to spread and afford a little larger scope for improving them: care will then be wanting to make him speak plain, to pronounce words of similar sound distinctly, to understand the difference between those of the same sound, and to know the meaning of what he says. When he comes to read there will be a difficulty to prevent his getting into a tone, which everybody learns more or less at first, and not one in a thousand can wholly get rid of all their lives after. The most likely way to avoid or to cure it seems to be by writing down some sentences that you may have used yourself or should be likely to use upon particular occasions in common discourse, in joking and merriment, in anger and expostulation, in importuning, in compassionating, in telling a story, in relating an historical fact, in describing something grand, magnificent, or surprising: and teaching him to read them exactly in the same manner as you spoke them: for by this means he may learn the natural emphasis and inflections of voice belonging to the several styles, the familiar, the humorous, the pathetic, the narrative, and the sublime.

The object now to be had in view will be to encourage the growth of his faculties, to whet his sagacity, and begin to store his mind with such little sparks of knowledge as he is capable of receiving: for which purpose it will be expedient to gain his confidence and friendship, that he may apply to you of his own accord, not be uneasy in your company, nor want to get away among the servants, that he may have no scruple of telling you what he has been doing when out of sight, nor stand under perpetual dread of your displeasure. Yet it will be necessary to preserve in him a dependence and reverence, which you may better do by steadiness than sternness, not perpetually constraining him in his motions nor interrupting his plays, rather assisting his contrivance in the prosecution of them: laying as few commands as possible, but always enforcing those you do lay with a peremptory mildness, and so far as feasible pointing out the reasons and expedience of them. If correction be needful it must not be administered in anger, nor without an expression of unwillingness, and showing the necessity of it for prevention of worse consequences.

When he plies you with questions do not discourage him, for curiosity well turned is the main spring of knowledge: he will probably ask more than you have skill to answer; if this be the case acknowledge it honestly, and do not save your own credit by chiding or laughing at him for his impertinence; if the thing be above his comprehension, or not proper to be

known, or too trifling to deserve pains, show him that calmly; if none of these obstacles interfere, explain the matter clearly to his capacity, or which is better where it can be done, follow Socrates' method, by leading him dexterously to find out the proper answer for himself.

As this business of dealing with a child's curiosity is a very difficult point to manage, it will be well worth the parent's while to study it as a science, and prepare himself beforehand for the exercise: for by this way you may instil more instruction than by precept or document, because while you give the child lessons perhaps his head is running a woolgathering, so that not a word of them sticks, but when asking questions his attention is open, and nothing of what you can pour will run over. There is the like advantage in employing little plays, feats of dexterity, tricks upon cards, bits of paper to be disposed in different figures, prints, stories, riddles, and such like, for whetting his ingenuity: nor will it be useless sometimes to criticise his expressions and try to puzzle him, provided the attack be no greater than he can defend himself against, or that you help him out if he be gravelled; for then he will not be disheartened by it, but learn to speak warily, correctly, expressively, and pertinently, and to think of what he says.

But every thing is not to be made a play of, either in childhood or maturity of age, for those who resolve to live a whole life of amusement are the most useless, and generally the most unhappy of mortals: therefore one principal view must be to inure him early to something of task and discipline, to train him gradually to bear close application; and so far to consult his ease, as it can be procured by giving him a taste for work, by teaching him despatch in it, and inspiring him with an ardour for the proficiency to be attained by it: for the surest road to ease and pleasure is not by flying labour, but by learning to take delight in so much as the health and forces will bear.

Nevertheless, different subjects require very different management, which makes it behoveful to observe carefully the talents and disposition of the child, that you may know what he is capable of, and which way his genius points, what irregularities he is liable to, and provide against them in time, whether he be rash or timorous, impetuous or sluggish, to improve nature where she is favourable, and amend her where she is deficient, to form the behaviour in conversing among strangers, that it may be clear both of rudeness and bashfulness.

Regard should likewise be had to the profession or way of life he is intended to follow, that he may have such sentiments inculcated, and be accustomed to such courses of employment as are suitable or preparatory thereto. A habit of keeping account of expenses, and readiness and plainness of style in epistolary correspondence will be serviceable in almost all stations: it is of more importance to be regular than minute in the former, and in the latter to be clear, easy, and lively, than to be witty, or if this be aimed at, it is better hit by the practice of catching such diverting thoughts as occur, than by pumping for them. This caution of accommodating the first years of life to those which are to follow, seems particularly needful for gentlemen who design their younger children for trades or occupations wherein they are to get their livelihood; for without very prudent management, the elegances, the superfluities, and round of pleasures they are suffered to partake in at home, will utterly incapacitate them for a life of parsimony and application to business.

For lads intending to go upon the line of learning, it has been disputed whether a school or a private tutor be more eligible; the discussion of this point seems

needless for general use because few can afford the latter, and perhaps there are some parents from whose example and manner of living little good is to be gotten at home, so they had better put their children into other hands. Where there is a robust constitution, good principles well riveted, and a sturdiness of temper not easily wound about by the incitements of a companion, I conceive a large school may be best; but if the frame be tender, the inclinations suspicious, or the mind too flexible by any impulse, I should prefer a small one, because there he may be more narrowly observed.

When delivered up to the master, things must be left to his management, for it would be presumptuous to teach a professor any thing in his own science; yet I may offer by way of Query, whether it would not be better to exercise children's memory upon things, more than upon words, and instead of those burdensome tasks usually set them upon repetition days, which seem needful only to qualify them for stage players, to put them upon repeating the substance of what lessons they have learned the week before, preserving some remarkable words and turns of expression, or passages which have a particular beauty or energy. And likewise whether among the Theses given to declaim upon, it might not be profitable sometimes to choose those wherein the boys will be heartily interested, in order to assimilate their exercises as near as possible to the real business of life; such as whether law, divinity, physic, the army, the sea, merchandize, or trade, be the more eligible profession, and for what characters, and to persons in what situation of circumstances: what are the advantages or conveniences of the county each boy belongs to, whether cricket or prison-bar, shuttle-cock or trap-ball, be the better amusement: why holidays are expedient, and what proportion of them is most suitable.

If they have had disputes among one another, or entertained any favourite notion either on morality, behaviour, politics, nature, dress, pleasure, elegance, or other subject, each may be set to support his own by an exercise: and many times several exercises may be branched out from one beginning, for it is common in disputation for one point to generate another. But whatever topic they maintain, it is expedient they should be used to employ such arguments only as really weigh with themselves, for the common way of filling up a page with a flow of plausible words, imitated from books, perhaps without having ever comprehended the force and pertinence of them in the originals, can teach them at best only to amuse or silence a gainsayer, but will never help to affect or convince anybody. I know it is necessary upon many occasions in life to use arguments to the man which you do not feel the force of yourself, but then they ought always to be such as you should be willing to act upon, if you were of his sentiments in other respects. This practice of addressing to the ear rather than to the heart or the understanding, is I conceive the occasion of so much emptiness and superfluity abounding in the discourses of mankind, and that they work so little upon one another in their conferences; and what is worse, leads them to deceive themselves by concealing from them the true motives of their actions, and palming upon them for such, whatever false colouring occurs, that might pass for a justification.

Nevertheless, a school is not to be depended upon for everything; sound principles of morality, discretion, and common prudence, good manners, and politeness, and knowledge of the world, are not to be expected from thence; if the master be well skilled in all these matters, of which there is a great chance, he will not have leisure nor opportunity to teach them; therefore it is incumbent upon the parent to lay the foundation well beforehand, to im-

prove the growth of them, and correct errors that have insinuated from time to time, as it is presumed the boy will come home at breakings-up.

If the parent have still retained the confidence of his child, so as to be regarded in the light of his best friend and counsellor, he may get from him an ingenious account of the characters and behaviour of his school-fellows, together with his own transactions among them, and instruct him how to manage with them so as neither to impose nor be imposed upon, to practise art and reserve for self-defence, but never for overreaching; to be neither tame nor quarrelsome, to preserve a spirit of charity, of honour, of equity, and decorum in all his dealings, even his squabbles and contentions to extricate himself out of difficulties, to escape anxiety in competitions, to bear hardships contentedly that cannot be remedied, and rest easy under disappointments; thereby qualifying him to bustle hereafter through a turbulent and contentious world. He may draw off his observation from external appearances to the qualities and disposition of the mind, and teach him to judge of persons not as children ordinarily do, by the colour of the eyes, features of the face, make of the limbs, gestures or tones of voice, for this will preserve him from fantastic likings and aversions, and prove of signal service to him in his intercourse with mankind, especially when he comes to think of the girls. To which improvements it may not be too trifling to add that of teaching him a good seat upon a horse, which a boy may easily learn, but a man never can, though he may often regret the want of it both for his uses and his pleasures.

12. The morals of a child cannot be begun upon too early, and the corner-stone of our building must be laid in Prudence; this then is the ground work from whence all other strokes in forming his character are to branch out. But to prevent mistakes arising from the uncertainty of language, wherein we are forced to use our words in different senses upon several occasions, I must give notice that Prudence here is not to be understood of a sagacity and penetration of judgment or improvement of the faculties, of which something has been already mentioned in the foregoing sections. For these are indeed desirable things but no part of the moral character; and so are a clear eye, a good ear, a sound digestion desirable things, yet nobody ever ranked them among the virtues.

Prudence then considered as a virtue, is nothing more than a quick sensibility and readiness of apprehending distant pleasure and pain in equally strong colours with the present: and this is the root from which all the other virtues, as well moral as theological, grow; for what is fortitude, temperance, and justice, but Prudence under pains and dangers, allurements of appetite and impulses of self-interest? What influence can Faith in the divine attributes have upon him, who cares for nothing beyond the enjoyments of sense? how can Hope find any room to operate, where the desires are wholly centered in the present moment? or what inducement has he, in whom they are so centered, to Charity, when he can make a present advantage by doing some great damage to his neighbour? But this groundwork of morality is not given immediately by nature, she only opens the passages from whence it may be drawn forth by careful cultivation: the appetites and desires shooting up spontaneously carry the thoughts a little beyond present sensation; the business then is to watch their growth, to check their luxuriances, and conduct them gently by practicable steps to reach the most distant futurity, for their ministry we must employ to attain our important purposes.

But we must not attempt to make large strides at once, for children are incapable of extending their concern to any length of time; next week is an age to them, their appetites and desires fasten upon gratifications near at hand, their fears and aversions are touched with mischiefs apprehended just impending over them, and those impulses may be skilfully turned into such courses from whence a further good progress may be made afterwards. Pleasure is their first sole allurement and most constant motive of action, from whence in a little time will grow a regard to use, and then to honour, by proper management in making them observe the subserviency of useful things to their pleasures, and the advantage of estimation for obtaining a supply of their wants.

The first use they will be sensible of is that of having the assistance of their parents, and their first ambition to stand well in their good graces, for they very soon begin to know when they have their friends about them, and receive encouragement from plauditory gestures or tones of voice, before they can understand your words. This propensity then deserves to be cultivated, and that care be taken to lead them into the proper measures by which the object of it is to be attained; nor ever encourage them in things which you must break them of afterwards, but rather in such whereof you foresee a good use may be made another time. Yet it is a very imperfect idea they can have of use, while depending altogether upon the help of others for every trifle they want: therefore it deserves to be made your constant aim to lead them into the way of helping themselves, to teach them the uses of their little powers, and engage them to provide for the amusements of the next hour, or the next day; stretching their views still further and further, as you find they can be extended, and making them observe the benefits they reap from the former cares, or any little skill they have taken pains to acquire, in order to encourage them to repeat the like again. By this means they may be brought into a desire of things and accomplishments useful without prospect of the particular pleasures to result therefrom: and they may be said to have made a beginning in the progress towards Prudence by having a concern for objects not immediately touching their senses.

The desire of being in good credit with you may with proper management by help of sympathy and exhortations judiciously applied, be transferred upon the practices the child sees conducive to gain it; and it is very material this translation should be made completely, for it will furnish him with a moral sense, make him be touched with things laudable and blameable, feeling a self-satisfaction in the one, and a compunction on falling into the other. He will then regard things not solely as pleasant or disgustful, but as right or wrong, and have a guidance of his own to keep him steady when your eye is not over him, which is a necessary provision for his future safeguard. For he must, some time or other, go from under your hands to act for himself, and the earlier he can be trained and gradually prepared to do this, he will be the more expert afterwards. But great care is requisite to fix the moral sense and the idea of usefulness upon proper objects, for in proportion as you can do this, you need only give directions, but may trust to the child himself for the execution; and it will be both beneficial and encouraging to trust him so far as you can safely, for liberty is the great privilege as well as the great danger of human nature, nor can there be a more useful science, especially in this country so fertile and even luxuriant of liberty, than to know how to use it well, so that it may

prove a real blessing unalloyed by the mischiefs consequent upon the abuse of it.

13. I have laid down in former Chapters that honour grows from use, and is there best deserved where it may be most usefully applied: for though all useful things do not gain honour, yet it belongs of right to none that are not nearly, or remotely so. If a lad makes a clever declamation upon the exit of Cato at Utica, it may be of no importance now-a-days to have that point well discussed, but the ingenuity with which he has handled it may be of great service to himself, and the world too, by enabling him to manage other points of moment: therefore he deserves applause, because it will be useful as an incentive to diligence in exercising his ingenuity.

I apprehend it very material to inure him to bear in mind this reference of honour to use, because it will direct to fix the sense of it upon the proper objects; for this sense is not innate nor distinguishes its objects naturally, like the eye and ear, but learned by instruction and sympathy, and may be turned, and frequently is turned upon very different and opposite objects, one man utterly despising what another values himself highly upon. Hence it appears that applause ought never to be bestowed wantonly, nor for the mere present amusement of yourself or your child, for it is an excellent engine for working upon the human machine, too precious to be employed upon trifles: the business then is to consider what courses are most conducive to his future enjoyment and happiness, or to render him serviceable to the world, and to place the point of honour upon those especially if you find he has no other incitements to pursue them, or there is some inclination drawing strongly the contrary way; for the great use of honour is to raise an ardour for things indifferent before, and overcome the opposition of indolence, appetite, and passion; what we stand already inclined to do, or clearly discern the use of towards procuring something we ardently desire, needs no further stimulus to provoke us.

There are some measures of conduct universally beneficial in all stations of life, therefore they deserve the incitement of praise in proportion as wanted: but some are more particularly needful for several professions, as the soldier, the scholar, the merchant, the mechanic, the gentleman, the statesman; therefore regard must be had to the way of life wherein your child is likely to be engaged, and his self-approbation directed to those sentiments and qualifications, which will stand him in most stead therein. When you have pitched upon what things are laudable, and settled the degree of excellence among them, great care is requisite to keep the moral sense attentive to the things themselves, and from running into a comparison of persons, that there may be a strong desire of excellence, but none of excelling. You may with good profit set examples of laudable qualities before a young person's eyes, in order to give him a livelier idea of them; but you may inspire him with an ardour of acquiring the like benefit and pleasure of possessing them, without thought of rivalship or superiority over the person who has them.

This I take to be very important, and at the same time a very difficult point to hit, the two desires being so generally confounded together in men's minds, and the one so very apt to degenerate into the other. The examples and discourses of the world, the necessity of rivalship frequently occurring in cases where there are many competitors for a prize which one only can obtain, contribute to fix the idea of excellence in that of surpassing others, so that it is become a nice distinction, which few can readily

enter into, to separate them. One can scarce find expressions of applause or exhortation, that do not convey something of comparison or rivalship to the imagination; and it is generally insisted on, that you cannot raise a sense of honour unless by first raising a spirit of emulation and eminence in some quality or other. This perhaps may be true as the world goes, though I apprehend it possible in theory to manage otherwise; but if you find it impracticable to gain your point without this expedient, still it will be advisable to employ it sparingly, not a jot further than absolutely necessary, endeavouring to turn the sense of honour upon things laudable in themselves, that is, upon such as may appear so without reference to anybody else possessing them in a higher or lower degree.

Since then there is such perpetual danger from all quarters of having the moral sense warped to a false direction, and we ourselves are so apt to mislead it insensibly when we think of nothing less, there will need all our vigilance, contrivance, and industry, to keep it steady in a right course, as being a matter of the utmost consequence. For how much soever the desire of excellence and that of excelling be blended together, so as to form one and the same idea in most people's apprehension, they are shown manifestly different by the contrary consequences they produce, as a tree is known by its fruits. From the fondness of excelling naturally grow vanity, pride, ambition, jealousy, envy, contention, calumny, petulance, and selfishness; Charity can never bear ingrafting upon this stock, for the man whose passion lies in surpassing, has a separate interest from that of all mankind, whom he must look upon with an eye of envy, rivalship, and contempt, and therefore can never heartily love them.

On the contrary, a glowing ardour for things excellent is the great incentive and cherisher of all the virtues, and all valuable accomplishments; for though virtue be profitable, the profit of it generally lies too remote to be discerned, or to touch us sensibly, but it is the self-approbation accompanying that carries us briskly on the progress, and renders the exercises of it a present reward. Where there is a true love of excellence, there prudence, discretion, diligence, charity, equity will be readily entertained, as things supremely excellent; whatever is so in any degree will appear proportionably amiable in our eyes wherever found, so that we shall rejoice to behold, and stand ever ready to increase it in others, as well as in ourselves. We shall regard the necessary competitions and contentions, and contrary attractions of the world around us as so many trials and temptations, sent to exercise this principal virtue, using all our skill and diligence to manage among them, so as that it may gather strength by the opposition.

14. Nothing contributes so much to inspire the love of excelling as an opinion of excelling, which grows up almost unavoidably in children from the manner of their being treated; they see the parents anxious for their welfare, the family contriving to divert them, the visitors obliging, and the servants obsequious, all the cares and all the thoughts they can take notice of are wholly centered upon themselves; from hence if good care be not taken, they will slide insensibly into a notion of their being the sole object worthy regard, which being riveted in them by continually humouring, when they come out into the world they will still conceit themselves precious creatures, become partial, overbearing, and unsympathizing, expect all the world should bend to their humours, and regard every minute failure therein as an insupportable injury.

In order to obviate this mischief, which will sprout up naturally unless

timely checked, it will be expedient in the first place, where there are several children, to preserve an exact impartiality in your dealings between them, making them sensible of one another's rights, and ready to allow one another's claims; then to let them see that you have other cares upon your hands wherein they have no concern, that other people have their several interests with an equal right to pursue them, and inure them gradually to entertain a sentiment of justice even towards strangers, and persons they do not like. It will be necessary to keep them from consorting with low company, not by giving them a contempt, but by representing that they will learn thereby a behaviour and language unsuitable to themselves, though very proper and becoming for persons who are to live and labour in a cottage: for you may point out the different qualifications requisite for different ways of life, without dwelling upon the superiority of one above another. But especially beware of servants instilling the prodigious importance of master or miss beyond all others of their inches, which they will be apt to do through mere indiscretion or ignorance: you may soon discover this by the prattle of the children, who love to repeat what they hear, and then your helping hand will be wanting to apply the proper remedy.

Nevertheless, together with a concern for the rights of other persons, you must not omit to lead them into a wariness and steadiness in the maintenance of their own: and that they may more willingly receive your instructions, apprize them to expect frequent opposition in the world, as well from the unreasonableness of some, as the misapprehensions of others, that they may strive to ward off the mischiefs of both by their sagacity and resolution, rather than by anger or fretting, which would contribute nothing to help them. As you find them capable, teach them to observe the difference of characters both on the good and bad side: for there is a mixture in all men, as also a secret bias making them partial to their own interests and desires without knowing it, this therefore they must guard against even in their friends, yet without taking distaste against them for a human infirmity: nor must they be hasty or violent either in their friendships or aversions, yet not prone to suspicion, but keeping their eyes open, nor ever giving themselves up to an implicit confidence in any.

15. The branches of learning chosen to put them upon, must be regulated by their genius and capacities, by the opportunities you have of improving them, and the particular station of life whereto they are destined: remembering to cultivate those most carefully which will serve the important uses of life, and teaching to place their credit on making a progress therein regarding such as will be useful to them for their general commerce in the world, as well as for their private occupations. For courses of life requiring much application of thought, I conceive a little mathematics will be eminently serviceable, because nothing helps so much to closeness of attention, exactness of observation, clearness of reasoning, and acuteness in finding out the minute steps by which one truth introduces another. To which by way of counterpoise may be joined history, biography, and whatever lets one into the knowledge of men, manners, and usages; because this will enable them to render abstraction visible, and the discoveries of speculation applicable to the real uses of life.

Nevertheless the ornamental accomplishments, so far as there is room for them without breaking in upon the others, deserve not to be neglected, for they have their uses too. They furnish engagement for the time, filling up the spaces which otherwise would be worse employed; they find matter

for the judgment to work upon, exercise the faculties, and keep them steady to one regular pursuit; they procure credit to the possessor, make men sociable by being able to give mutual entertainment, and thereby introduce opportunities of doing one another more important service by bringing them into better confidence and knowledge of their reciprocal wants. Though they terminate only in pleasure, yet the amusements of life, when to be had without an after reckoning, are an object well worth the striving for: but having entertainment only for their object, they can be ranked no higher than as manly playthings, therefore no man is entitled to claim a merit upon his being a connoisseur, or having an exquisite taste in any of the polite arts, unless so far as he esteems it meritorious that he does not still continue a child: and it may be observed that those who do make a merit of them, are always infected with a strong tincture of the desire of excelling.

Nevertheless, if this notion of merit can be kept clear of, they will approach nearer to something of real merit, and may claim a resemblance with virtue herself: for as virtue ever prefers the most general and most durable good, so these sciences of pleasure conduct to the most general and most durable entertainment. Every simpleton knows what he likes now, but the man of taste alone can tell him what he shall like by and by, and what other folks will like. If you build a house or lay out a garden upon your own fancy, you may be prodigiously delighted with it while new, yet in a little time disgusted with some blemishes, or find some inconveniences you did not think of; but apply to the connoisseur, and he will choose you a situation and give you a plan that you shall never be tired of, nor meet with any who do not behold it with approbation and pleasure. Besides, as imagination is capable of acquiring many more tastes than nature gave her, it requires art to know beforehand, and conduct her into what tastes will afford the strongest and most sensible relish.

Let it be remembered, notwithstanding, that those arts are not expedient for everybody: many a young tradesman has been ruined by his taste for elegance, and many a young lawyer spoiled by an exquisite judgment, or the opinion of it, in poetry and dramatic performances: therefore they are very dangerous to people in business who do not want engagement for their time in the duties of their profession, from which those other engagements would prove a fatal avocation. Lads intended to get their own livelihood had better be kept close to the science of doing that, and serving the public therein, than permitted to study the science of pleasure.

16. You cannot be too careful to study their tempers in order to take the full benefit of a promptitude to anything commendable, and to rectify whatever you find amiss: if they be sly, cunning, and crafty, to inculcate openness and sincerity; if careless, to teach them caution; if sluggish, to spur up their activity; if impetuous, to moderate their ardour; if obstinate, to bring them flexible by methods, the gentler that will do, the better: if volatile, to fix them in some steadiness. Nor can you be too vigilant to watch the sprouting of evil weeds that may start up in them from time to time; if you perceive them inclinable to lying, tricking, drinking, gaming, wastefulness, contemptuousness, envy, or spite, those evil weeds must be nipped in the bud, or it will be too late to apply a remedy when they are grown inveterate; for it is too true a proverb, that what is bred in the bone will never out of the flesh; therefore the malady must be cured early, before it penetrates to the bone.

There is one thing very needful to be well guarded, and that is the purity

of their manners and sentiments; this is the more difficult to secure, because you cannot caution them particularly what to avoid without suggesting and perhaps raising incentives to the means of offence. The only method is by guarding all the avenues leading remotely thereto, without letting them see the reasons of your caution, by making them leave their pillow as soon as awake, finding them constant employment either of task or play, and keeping them out of company that might be dangerous or indiscreet. Nor is it enough to prevent the rise of evil motions in the heart, without attending likewise to check the luxuriances of the good, for they may become evil too by their excess: desire or affection is the great spring of our movements, without which we could make no progress in any course, nor find a preference in one thing above another; but desire too much fostered is apt to corrupt into a passion which differs from it only in degree of vehemence, for passion is nothing else than an extravagant desire. Therefore it is highly expedient to observe the growth of inclination, that it may never rise above its pitch, and for that purpose to cultivate as great variety of them as you can, that they may moderate and balance one another; for the more objects we can affect, the larger scope we shall have for gratification, and the choice of them will lie more under the control of reason and discipline.

But passions can never be numerous because they engross so much of the mind as to leave but little room for competitors, and for one gratification they meet with, they lose us a thousand others which must all be sacrificed to their interests: for a man under impulse of any passion cares for nothing else, nor can turn his hand with relish to anything that does not immediately coincide therewith; a young lad deeply smitten retains no gust of his former diversions; neglected Tray and Pointer lie, and coveys unmolested fly. Therefore if you perceive an uncommon eagerness rising in a child, endeavour to stop it forthwith, not by direct contradiction unless when you can find no means of diverting his thoughts some other way.

The like with what has been said of desire, may be applied to dislike and aversion, which always contains a desire of avoiding the object disgustful, and will degenerate sooner into a passion, because evil strikes stronger upon the apprehension than good, and when both accost together, the bitter of the one quite evaporates the sweetness of the other. The most common and most pernicious of the repulsive passions that urge the mind to fly their object is fear, which is an excess of caution corrupting that salutary quality into an arrant poison: for caution is the basis of judgment, the prime ingredient of prudence, the harbinger of confidence, the monitor, in dangers, and safeguard in pleasures; but fear enervates the powers, confuses the understanding, and proves a continual torment so long as it operates. Therefore inure your child to be as cautious and circumspect in all his proceedings as the briskness of his spirits will bear, but strive with all your skill to keep him clear from fears of every kind, whether the religious, the political, those relating to life, or health, or fortune, or pain, or disgrace, and all fantastical terrors of which there are more among mankind than one can well enumerate.

You will find it necessary to preserve an awe of yourself over him, yet this awe, though binding upon him to do things he does not like, may be distinguished from fear, for there is a real difference between fear and obligation. A man obliged by appointment to meet somewhere upon a party of pleasure, if you ask him to go elsewhere will excuse himself upon that account, yet fear and terror have no share in the motive that sways him to

refuse you: so you may inure the child to regard your injunctions as obligatory without seeing anything terrible in the breach of them, and bring him into an habitual unwillingness to incur your displeasure, without once thinking of the consequences that might ensue thereupon.

17. But all your cares will be of little avail unless you assist them to take effect by your example, setting before the child a pattern of those good qualities you exhort him to learn; for children are extremely imitative, observant of every little word and motion, and turn of countenance, and way of acting open to their notice: and I am apt to think their future character depends more upon what sentiments and manners of proceeding they catch inadvertently, than upon what is generally comprehended under the term Education; nor would I pronounce it impossible, that children might be led into all kinds of knowledge and useful science by a regular, industrious, judicious conduct of all persons about them, without other aid than such instructions to their ignorance as they would apply for of their own accord. How much soever this notion may seem romantic, certainly a great deal may be done by that influence, and by expression of our own sentiments concerning things laudable or useful, without addressing to them in the way of document, or by sight of the measures and methods we take in our own proceedings.

Yet if there be not skill sufficient to make all the profit that might be made of imitation, still it is in every body's power to avoid doing hurt by it, which people do frequently by their indiscretion; so that vigilance is rather needful here than knowledge or judgment. Example has been always counted more prevalent than precept, and by its bad influence may easily overthrow all the good that has been laboured to be done by the other. You may in some measure abate this influence from the examples of other persons, by showing their evil tendency or turning them into ridicule; but you cannot condemn nor ridicule your own actions: you will have neither inclination nor eyes to see the blameable in them when once performed, nor would it be prudent to lessen yourself in the child's esteem; which esteem will give a credit to what he sees done by you, or where it does not, still he will catch your manners by mechanical sympathy without designing or thinking of it.

Juvenal says, the greatest reverence is due to children; by which must be understood that we cannot be too much upon the guard how we behave before them, never to betray any marks of passion, intemperance of mind, greediness of desire, folly, or selfishness in their presence: if we have a foible we are resolved not to part with, let us reserve the indulgence of it for times when they are not by; for how can we pretend to love them when we cannot restrain any present sally of imagination that may do them more mischief, than all the benefits of education can compensate? What signifies exhortations to moderate their desires, when they see them continually breaking out with violence in yourself? What inducement can they have to love early hours, when they know you lie a-bed every day till noon? What encouragement to industry, when they perceive you spend your time in idling and trifling? What safeguard to their purity, when endangered by your indecent jests and discourse? What caution against the lure of intense pleasures and diversions, when they find you hunting after them perpetually? How can you instil courage and an opinion of hardiness, if you practise an affectation of fearfulness and delicacy upon every trifling occasion? By what instructions will you make them candid and equitable, if you show a selfishness, greediness, contempt, and party

virulence in your own temper? How can you expect to make them good managers, while you give yourself up to carelessness, waste, and dissipation?

But you will say it is unavoidable to do many things before children which one must not permit them to do, and they may be taught to know the difference between themselves and grown persons. I do not deny them capable of learning an idea of propriety which makes the same procedure becoming in one person, that would be blameable in another, and it behoves you to teach them this idea, together with the rules and reasons of it, in proportion as you find them capable: but they will soon perceive whether those actions of yours which you forbid them to practise, proceed from propriety or an intemperance and weakness of mind, by the very form of your injunctions. For you may say to a child, you must not get on horseback though I may, because I am stronger and know how to manage him; but you cannot tell him you must not swear nor get drunk, but I may; your prohibition here must be general, as against things wrong and blameable in everybody. Therefore if you invite him by your practice to what you prohibit by your remonstrances, though you should be able to keep him in order for the present by the awe of your authority, it will be a state of irksomeness and bondage to him; he will wish for the time that shall rid him of his restraint, that he may take the same liberties you do, and perhaps will take them sooner, as often as he thinks it can be done without hazard of a discovery: therefore discretion should withhold you even from some things allowable for yourself, where you cannot make him understand the danger and mischief of them to him.

But in order the better to lead him into a knowledge of propriety as he grows up, let him be taught to cast a retrospect upon the stage of life he has already passed through, for he will be fond of remarking the impropriety of children less than himself doing as he does, and will readily enter into the reasons of it, by which you make him sensible of the difference between himself, and others that are older. The like method you may employ to abate his fondness for pleasures, as if they could never lose their relish, taking the benefit of what little experience he has, which is always a stronger root of knowledge than instruction, productive of more keeping fruit; for the playthings which gave him vast delight in the nursery he utterly despises at school; the kites, and marbles, and castle tops he was fond of then, afford him no amusement when grown to full stature; from whence he may conclude that the diversions and gallantries wherefrom he now expects a supremity of happiness may become insipid in their turn, and he may learn to provide for satisfactions suitable to the perfect state of manhood, and old age.

Nor will it be of little service for your conducting him if you can recall to mind the very ideas, desires, and fancies you had yourself at his years, for this will be a sort of setting the old head upon young shoulders; you will feel what the shoulders can bear, be less severe upon his failings and sallies which once were your own, see clearer the dangers they lead into, and know better how to manage with them. There is an indiscretion people are sometimes guilty of in consulting while their children are in the room upon the measures they shall take with them, particularly to break them of some unlucky trick; they think the children take no notice because seeming busied in their plays, but for all that they are very attentive upon those occasions, and will be sure to counterplot you, or perhaps arm themselves with an obstinacy you will find very difficult to surmount.

Some are very apt to vent themselves in wishes for things that would be

mighty convenient for them, as that they could find a mine, get a prize in the lottery, obtain a place at court, or that some overgrown rich man would leave them a swinging legacy: if these imaginations are an amusement to you, however, keep them to yourself, but let your child hear nothing of this sort, for it may teach him to be discontented, visionary, and perhaps make him a projector, or a gamester. Beware likewise of boasting of your family, fortune, taste, abilities, or any other superiority, and of criticising, censuring, or ridiculing other persons; for this would lead him the ready road into the pernicious desire of excelling. Neither cry up his beauty, his stoutness, his parts, or his proficiency; for this must infuse an opinion of excelling, which is poisonous unless administered sparingly, so far only as is needful to give him encouragement in his exercises.

But the most dangerous incaution, because the most common and least willingly guarded against, is that of showing a fondness for him which you are unable to resist; therefore you cannot be too careful of your gestures, your countenance, your expressions, and tones of voice, that they do not betray a weakness of love: for if he once find himself of importance to you, and that his displeasures give you a sensible uneasiness, he will become precious in his own eyes, domineering over the servants, and assuming upon everybody; he will grow humoursome, presumptuous, and perpetually use his power over you for gaining his own little ends. You may and ought to be tender of him, but let it be with a judicious tenderness; or if it should not, let him not see the contrary, but manage so that nothing may hinder his being persuaded, that you could find in your heart to use any rigour or severities his behaviour should make to appear necessary in your judgment.

18. There is no need to say much of religion, because the methods for instructing in the rudiments of it are in everybody's hands: it is enough therefore to recommend that what the child learns by rote, or hears discoursed of among his elders, he should be made to understand; but this must be done slowly and gradually, in proportion as he is capable of comprehending an explanation. The doctrines of religion, as I have endeavoured to prove in former chapters, are so far from superseding the use of reason, that they will answer no useful purpose without a sober and careful exercise of it. they were given not to supply its place, but as marks to direct its progress, and checks to preserve it from dangerous, or unprofitable deviations, or as theses whereon to exercise it with greatest emolument. Therefore it is good husbandry to nourish up the tender buds of reason as they open, to study the art of distinguishing the bearing twigs, and leading them into positions where they will yield the fairest fruit; for one must not expect much discernment in children: the business lies in finding out what conceptions and turns of thought are the distant avenues conducting into sound discernment.

They may be taught by degrees to distinguish what part of their composition is themselves, and what is separable from them; to remember that life will have an end, and to feel a concern for futurity, by being put in mind that it may be ended very soon by means of accident or disease; to form some idea of an invisible power, from whence all the visible powers of nature must have been originally derived; to observe a connection of interests between fellow-creatures, and that their own are affected by the abilities, the dispositions, and behaviour of the persons they live amongst: to lead them into right notions of goodness, equity, justice, and prudence. But very little can be done at first by reasoning, they must be stored with rules and doc-

rines to be taken from your authority upon trust, which may serve for the foundation and materials wherewith afterwards to erect the structures of reason. Their system must be wholly exoteric, admitting nature and chance to a large share in the production of events, and the divine power represented to interfere by immediate operation, whereon the esoterics may be introduced by little and little as the understanding opens to comprehend them, taking great care they be not misapprehended, so as to seem a contradiction, and overthrow what had been inculcated before.

While there is nothing but appetite and amusement engaging to their desires, it may be necessary to employ a degree of fear for keeping them attentive to the matters you tell them of; but the less of it you can do with the better: and in proportion as you can get other springs to work upon, as they come to have an idea of use, to find a relish for remote advantages, and can be made sensible of the beneficial tendency of your instructions, discard fear as superfluous, and always mischievous when superfluous; for though it be the beginning of wisdom, it is incompatible with hearty, unreserved charity, wherein the perfection of wisdom terminates.

What rules and forms you judge needful keep them steady to the observance of, and a little more strictly than you wish they should always adhere to, for it is much easier to relax than to straighten. Therefore, as said in a former place, I love to see young people rather too rigid and scrupulous, because their own experience and the world they converse with will abate of this excess: but libertinism is the hardest thing in the world to cure, because disdaining to submit to any regimen. If a lad were not accustomed early to the use of prayer and ceremonies, he would find them unavailing could he be brought to try them afterwards, for the strangeness and awkwardness with which he would go about them, fixing his whole attention upon the external appearances, must render them an empty form working nothing of that Metanoia or change of sentiments, wherein their sole virtue consists. The summary of Religion having been comprised in one short sentence, to live soberly, righteously, and godly; these three are correspondent parts of the compact body, which it should be a principal aim to make children sensible of, to show them how the two first may be derived by a reference from the last, and the last is best attained by being prosecuted in such manner as that it may become a direction and aid in practising the other two: for that is the most genuine godliness which tends to increase sobriety and righteousness, and these are best maintained by sound and lively sentiments of the former.

19. I do not pretend in the foregoing pages to have laid down a complete system of education, nor pointed out all the particular aims expedient to be held in view therein; yet I conceive here are enow to make a happy and a useful man, if steadily pursued, and perhaps more than can be pursued so effectually as one would wish: for none can make it their whole business to take care of their children, it is well if they can be persuaded to make it a business at all, and not a mere amusement, or an obligation of custom which one must comply with, because else what will the world say? A thing to be thought on only by the by, when one is in the humour, in the vacancies between polite engagements, consisting in directions now and then to the servants, or choice of a school, or a tutor.

My intention was only to offer such suggestions as occurred, for the chance of what benefit may be made of them: if anybody shall find one or two among them which he did not happen to think of before, and which he judges profitable and practicable, he will do well to adopt into his plan,

taking care beforehand that he has firmness enough to prosecute what he determines upon; for no aim can be attained merely by a conviction of its desireableness, nor by a sudden violent resolution, but by an unbroken perseverance. But whatever plan he resolves on or additional strokes he admits into it, he must be careful to examine whether they be suitable to the subject he has to work upon: for you cannot make a Mercury of every stick, but must endeavour to find out the best that can be done with it, and adapt your scheme to your materials: nor be disheartened if you find a coarseness in the grain, for every wood is usable for some good purpose, and Providence who put them in your hands has no doubt suited them to its own design; therefore it is not your business to depend upon doing great matters, but to take care that nothing be lost through your own negligence or mismanagement.

Yet there is a certain character of discretion deserving to be made a principal aim in all cases, as being attainable with small talents and needful to be cultivated with the greatest. This is better understood by observation of persons possessing it, than by any explanation of words: but the marks of it may be seen in a uniformity of conduct, and pertinence of action, void of self-conceit, affectation, and singularity, giving into no extravagances, nor aiming at projects beyond its forces, proceeding quietly its own way, compliant to the occasion, but not whiffling about with every slight attraction; attentive to every light that breaks in, and calmly diligent to make use of it. We may sometimes see persons of very little capacity, who by help of a few principles, well chosen and well rivetted, have been brought to possess this quality, proceed almost mechanically by its direction, pass a sound judgment upon things within their narrow sphere, and go through life with more comfort to themselves, and credit among their neighbours, than others of more shining accomplishments whose great talents are vitiated, and overbalanced by some egregious folly.

CHAP. XXXVII.

DEATH.

Unsparing grisly king of terrors, sole universal monarch, whose power no prowess can resist, whose peremptory call no artifice can evade; the eye cannot support thy looks, nor the blood forbear to curdle at the thoughts of thee; we stifle all remembrance of thee, that we may enjoy our pleasures securely, which would utterly lose their relish or be embittered thereby. For thou tearest us away from our friends, turnest us out of our possessions, breakest short all our beloved schemes, and deprivest us of all our means of enjoyment. Whatever reason may suggest, still thy stroke seems an annihilation to our fancy, or presents an uncertainty, more dismal, wherein imagination can find no certain object on which to fix a distant hope. Thou comest beset with pains, uneasinesses, regrets, incapacity, and tastelessness for all common engagements, which multiply the horrors of thine approach; and, as if thy native frightfulness was not enough to dismay us, we are trained up to dread thee sorer by the behaviour, the discourses, and customs of the world around us. For thou art spoken of as the worst of evils, the danger principally to be guarded against before all others; men will part with anything to save their lives, undergo any severities of medicine or sur-

gery, to retard thine advances, which they know must reach them one time or another; lamentations are made for the loss of friends, which would be thought selfish, if arising rather from our own share in the loss than theirs; the law denounces death as her severest punishment, reserved for the most atrocious crimes, and deems burnings, confiscations, loss of limbs, perpetual exile, and imprisonment, milder chastisements; and men of thought have pronounced destruction abhorrent to nature herself who has given an innate principle of self-preservation to all animals without exception.

But what evidence is there of this innate principle, since animals of every species just entered into life, though then most helpless, show no signs of fear nor sense of danger until taught it by experience of pain, and the causes bringing hurt upon them. They then indeed begin to have a principle of self-defence by resisting or flying from whatever threatens them with mischief, but it is a defence against pain, not against destruction, which they know not what it is. For there is no appearance the brutes have any idea of death, or the least imagination concerning the continuance or discontinuance of their being, consequently can have no fear of a thing to them wholly unknown and inconceivable; but they have an abhorrence of pain, a dread of terrible objects striking them with an apprehension of hurt, a love of liberty to take their common amusements; they have likewise appetites and instincts of various sorts prompting to their several gratifications: and Providence has wisely adapted these principles of action so as to lead them thereby unknowingly into the measures needful for preservation of their lives, by an aversion to things destructive and an appetence to those requisite for their accommodation and sustenance.

With respect to man, the case is much the same while he continues to be guided by motives little different from the brutes, to wit, present pleasures or pains, the gratifications or aversions of appetite, until reason beginning to open gives entrance to new appetites which nature never planted; therefore inoculation is recommended before seven years old, because then children have no fears. But when arrived to the competent use of language and reflection, we are continually warned of dangers surrounding us, excited to cares of self-preservation, everybody wishes and expects long life, deplores the loss of it as a grievous misfortune, laments every disease, or accident seeming to endanger it; we love to think how we shall employ, or how amuse ourselves a week or a month hence, all which prospects death cuts short; we see it brought on by painful distempers, tiresome sicknesses, or violent hurts; the forlorn appearance of a dead body, the close imprisoning coffin, the yawning grave, and melancholy pomp of funerals strike a mechanical dejection upon the spirits, to which add the necessary admonitions of Religion respecting a future reckoning: no wonder then if all these causes combining to operate, raise alarms in us that would not have sprouted up spontaneously, and give us a strong idea of self-preservation with an abhorrence of whatever threatens destruction.

Yet we do not find this abhorrence universal; Philosophy can overcome it, enabling the professor, like Socrates, to swallow the deadly potion as a cheerful glass among his friends; Religion can despise it and urge the zealot to court a crown of martyrdom; ambition, fame, revenge will stifle it; vexation, disappointment, and any intolerable pressure will outweigh it; the ruined gamester, the broken trader, and the forsaken courtier, have sometimes flown to death as to a sure asylum, and even the whining lover has taken refuge there against a fantastic evil of his own creating; the common soldier and the sailor lose all dread of it, not by profound reason

ings, but by familiarity with the object, by the taunts and jests, the intrepid countenance and behaviour of their comrades: the unenlightened Canadian takes pride in singing while tortured by his conquerors; and there are some who, like Shakespeare's Bernardino, seem never to have had a sensibility of anything beyond the present indulgence of their gross appetites.

Thus it appears that the fear of death, unknown to other animals, is not so deeply implanted in human nature but there are methods by which it may be rooted out, and one may generally observe that persons of a hardiness capable of enduring pain and distress are less obnoxious to it than the delicate, the effeminate, and the voluptuous, who have no way of possessing their minds in tranquillity, unless by wholly banishing it out of their thoughts. But since this practice is far from being recommendable, as serving at best only for a present expedient, which must fail whenever the near approach of death forces it upon our reflection; and that of insensibility, though necessary to qualify some persons for the public service, is but reducing them in that respect to the condition of brute animals; for we find the horse capable of being made as fearless in battle as the trooper who mounts him: let us try whether we cannot help ourselves better by the use of our reason, so as to bear looking death calmly and steadily in the face, to contemplate all his features, and examine fairly what there is of terrible, and what of harmless in them.

2. In order to do this more effectually, it will be necessary to analyze him into his constituent parts: for death, although esteemed one thing and called by a name of the singular number, is in reality a complication of terrors springing from different quarters, and it is their united forces aiding each other, like the poles of a loadstone, that make him so formidable. There are the troubles, the sicknesses preceding the convulsions, agonies, ghastly countenances, and the expiring groan; the regret of leaving our friends; the deprivation of all our possessions; the breaking short of all our schemes; the cutting off our prospect of things we used to amuse ourselves with the thoughts of being to do; the strangeness of the situation being what we never had experienced before; the loss of our powers and ideas wherewith we used to help ourselves; the nigh-spent hour-glass of time; the coming on of an event it has ever been our principal care to avoid; the dismal condition of the body pent up in a cold grave, in solitude and darkness; the difficulty of comprehending happiness in the abstract without sensible objects wherefrom it may issue; the proneness of imagination to forebode mischief in uncertainty; the distrust of our former reasonings: the backwardness to credit other evidences than our senses or experience: the habitual aptness of certain terrors to rise mechanically we know not why; and, lastly, the expectation of a future reckoning.

All these sources of affright pouring in their agitations from every side, raise such a turbulence in the centre as throws the mind quite off her basis: it is in vain to think of assuaging them all together, for while you turn to wrestle against one adversary, another by a sudden shock darted in upon the imagination will trip you up behind. Therefore we must deal with them as the old man in the fable instructed his sons to deal with the fagot which they could not break with all their might until he had untied it, and then they found no difficulty in snapping short the single sticks. In like manner it behoves us to separate the causes of our disquiet, considering each of them distinctly; but this separation is not so easy as might be

imagined, for if you go to talk to people upon the folly of fearing hurt to the dead insensible body, they will cry, But then to toss about in a sick bed without hopes of recovery; try to comfort them upon this article, and they interrupt you with, But then to leave all one's friends, one's home, one's conveniences, and enjoyments: thus they will dodge you round with their But thens, so that you can never get hold of their hand to help them.

This being the case, makes it more expedient to enter upon the task in good time while in health and vigour, when the object appearing at a distance throws no confusion over the mind, but we are able to draw the eye off from other parts of it in order to contemplate some one among them more attentively. For doing this effectually it will not be sufficient to content ourselves with the common topics of declamation chimed in the ear without ever sinking into the heart, but to examine the point thoroughly and fairly, not stifling what we dislike, placing everything in its just light, and allowing every consideration its due weight; that so we may become masters of the true state of the case, and attain a full conviction founded upon solid reasons, not to be shaken afterwards by suggestions of something that had been overlooked.

But an inveterate misapprehension cannot be cured at once by the clearest judgment of the understanding, for the fault lies in the imagination, which will return to its own bias as soon as the operation of the other faculty ceases: therefore it will be necessary frequently to revise the point, running over the process whereby we formed our judgment, until we bring it to be an habitual train of thinking, by which our conviction will be turned into persuasion, and become one branch of the virtue of Faith. Thus although a good life in general be the best preparation for death, yet here is a particular preparation adapted to secure us against the fears of it, and we shall see presently that our progress in this preparation must assist our endeavours towards leading a good life: so that by labouring prudently for our temporal ease and tranquillity, we shall in so doing advance a considerable step towards our future interests. For in this, as in other instances, though our well being in the next life be our proper ultimate aim and principal concern, we can gather no light from our stores of experience how to compass it, but our own good and that of our fellow-creatures in this world and the marks which God has given us for our sure direction.

3. To examine our object then by piecemeal in all its several parts, let us begin with the pains and distresses accompanying it, as having the fairest title to raise our apprehensions, because pain is grievous to human nature: but so it is when not endangering the life, wherefore we have no more reason to be afraid of it then, than at other times. But people fancy it must be acuter then than at other times: why so? what foundation is there for the fancy? some obtain their quietus without any signs of pain at all, as if dropped into sleep: and when brought to their end by distemper, there is no appearance of its being more tormenting for being fatal. Physicians tell you, he that recovers from a violent disease suffers more by it than he that fails; for the uneasiness springs from the struggles of nature, which are greatest before the crisis, or, when that proving favourable, leaves her strength unexhausted with which she still continues to labour for throwing off the load oppressing her: but when the scene of death begins, nature has yielded to the enemy, having lost her vigour by which she agitated the nervous, as well as the secretory vessels, so that the senses become be-

numbed, no longer able to strike the same sensations as in their former state.

Therefore in some diseases, as the palsy and the coma, ease and insensibility are reckoned the most fatal symptoms; and so it is in violent inflammations, which are extremely painful until the mortification begun sets the patient at perfect ease: thus the approach of death is known by the departure of pain, and probably the last stage of all distempers is a palsy, wherein some mechanical motions remain, but those which reach the sensory cease, or act but feebly. For that the convulsions and those called agonies are mere motions of the machine, not struggles of the active powers, nor affecting the organs of sense, may be gathered from their similitude with convulsive fits, to which some persons otherwise in good health are subject, when come out of them they can give you no account of what passed in them, but the whole time seems as much lost as in sound sleep: so after the convulsions of a fever, if there be an interval of sense, you do not find the patient complain of having suffered under them, nor does he remember anything of what has happened; or as I have heard instances of some persons, when too weak to stir themselves, a convulsion has suddenly raised them upright in their bed without stupifying their senses, they take it for a voluntary motion, a return of their strength, call for their hat and gloves, want to go out upon their usual business, and feel no other uneasiness than from the opposition of the people about them.

But we hope to escape other evils by caution and good management, whereas death is inevitable: it is true death is certain, but a painful death is not so: and since there are various passages out of this world, we may confide in the goodness of God that he will assign us one proportionable to the firmness of the mind he has given us means of acquiring, and not impose upon us a burden greater than we are able to bear. It is our part to prepare our shoulders beforehand for whatever burden we shall be called upon to bear, by storing in such firmness as the way of life we are engaged in shall afford opportunities of gaining, and by patient endurance of whatever pains or troubles fall upon us in our course. And when the last triat does come, we may take encouragement from its being the last, for it is easier to pluck up resolution for struggling with a difficulty that cannot hold long, than to maintain perseverance through an unlimited series of them: but we may be sure when this is ended of having no more bodily pains to go through, nor danger of diseases, wounds, fractures, housebreakers, invasions, fires, losses, or vexations, that used to alarm us so frequently in this world.

Now likewise, if never before, we may find a relish for prayer, and relieve ourselves by it as with a cordial: as it is not a time for pursuing esoteric ideas, there will be no harm in giving way to a persuasion of moving God by our importunities, but then they must not turn upon obtaining recovery, for there is no room to expect he will alter his courses of nature upon our account; their proper object is for resignation, patience, content, and such temper of mind as will conduce to our present ease, for this is complying with the courses of nature, and indeed, though that need not be had in view, will give us a better chance, if there be any left, of recovering.

4. Let us proceed next to the regret on leaving our friends, being turned out of our possessions, conveniences, and places whereto we used to resort with delight, and breaking off all our favourite schemes: but there is no infidelity in departing from friends we cannot stay with, no waste nor im-

prudence in quitting possessions we cannot keep, nor inconstancy in laying aside schemes we can no longer pursue: so we have nothing to blame ourselves for, if we should cast off that attachment which was commendable only because it helped to supply us with the materials and methods of enjoyment, and made us serviceable to one another. But we can expect no more of the pleasures we used to find in them: very true, yet neither shall we feel a want or miss of them, for they are not so necessary to us as that we cannot subsist in tranquillity without them.

Some of our friends have been taken from us long ago, others were not born till we had enjoyed many years of life, and our connections have frequently varied, yet always seemed engaging to us for the time: while children we had no possessions, we toiled not, neither did we spin, yet our Heavenly Father provided for us by that instinct he gave our earthly parents: we then had no thought of those schemes and store of conveniences that appear so indispensable to us now. Our fondness for all these things proceeds from habit, because we have been used to affect them, and from the condition of our bodies requiring provisions of accommodations, assistance of other persons in our uses and pleasures, and a train of pursuits to keep us continually engaged. But while on the bed of sickness, we are in no condition to use those sources of enjoyment or engagement that have supplied us hitherto, and if that terminates in our dissolution, we shall be as little in a condition to reap any benefit from them; therefore the parting with them is no cause of regret, as it would be to a living man who still retains many wants and desires that cannot be satisfied without them. But when quitting our animal machine, we quit therewith our habits, our propensities, ideas, and remembrance, becoming again a blank paper as when we first came into this world; so that if the objects of our old acquaintance were presented to us we should not know them again, nor have senses to perceive them, nor be able to conceive what benefit or pleasure they could do us, but remain as indifferent to take new impressions or desires, and run into new connections, as ever we were in our original state of infancy.

Yet why should we say the approach of death breaks off all our schemes, and threatens an utter destitution of all friendship? There is one scheme which, if we take care to make our principal, and bring all our under-views to bear reference or coincide with that, will not be frustrated by our removal from this imperfect state: even when the peremptory summons comes, we have still a step to make in the prosecution of it by patience and resignation to the call, and loosening our hearts from the good things that used to delight us here. And if we have cultivated a habit of charity, regarding ourselves as citizens of the world, and all perceptive creatures as intrinsically equal, we shall be capable of a good will to any of our fellow-citizens, whatever species of them we may be cast amongst. For charity in her first motion is universal, but must confine her intercourses to particular subjects, according to the degree of neighbourhood wherein they stand: our present neighbours were assigned their stations by the disposition of Providence causing them to be born in the same age, of the same country with ourselves, and endowing them with the qualities and characters that have rendered us mutually helpful and pleasing to one another: and what should hinder but that the same Providence may find us other neighbours, as well qualified to engage our dependence, and endearance by intercourses suitable to the wants, the abilities, and inclinations we shall then have allotted us?

Besides, it is not impossible that the same persons may be restored to our neighbourhood in a better situation, where there may be none of those little mistakes and misunderstandings, clashing of interests, or discordance of humours, which have sometimes interrupted or abated our harmony heretofore.

5. Of like sort is the complaint of having all our prospects of engagement or amusement overclouded; for the mind, when restrained by indisposition or confinement from exercising the active powers, loves still to feed in imagination upon her usual objects, she roams to scenes of business or entertainment expected in the succeeding days. This ruminating on distant prospects in view before her proves a solace under little uneasinesses; but when the reflection darts in, that all is only a vain imagination of scenes that can be enjoyed no more, they turn into scenes of horror and oppress the mind with the greater vexation, by how much the more eagerly they are beheld; they seem like a present possession torn away by violence, or they fret with the disappointment of meeting a sword's point in the very quarter whither we had turned for relief.

But I believe we need not apprehend this grievance will oppress us much on a bed of sickness, when there is little relish left for common amusements, and little leisure from present pains and wants to think of other things: it can only be in some intervals of quiet when the distemper suspends its violence without having impaired the senses, or in those incurable decays which waste but give no pain, nor sickness, that those troubles can assault us. Nor will they assault us with any force, if we have been careful during the course of our lives to hang our desires loose upon the things around, so as to be removeable upon the slightest touch of reason, or sight of an insurmountable obstacle intervening. I do not mean that we should endeavour to get rid of all our desires, for they make the pleasure of life, and are the springs of action; but we may desire a thing while appearing attainable without such an attachment or fondness as shall make us suffer by the failure of it when not to be had.

I have recommended several times before to provide ourselves with many desires, but to have no wants; but in order to prevent desire from corrupting into want, it will be necessary to discipline it continually, to keep the mind easy under rubs and disappointments, unanxious for success in her eagerest pursuits, not prone to harbour unavailing wishes: for this will not only save us many a vexation in our commerce with the world, but will be a preparation of which we shall find the benefit as well in the hour of death as in the day of judgment. Yet if the thought of our pleasures should molest us, we may place in contrast against them the troubles, contradictions, inconveniences, and infirmities, from which none of us are wholly exempt; and if we recollect how grievous they have sometimes seemed to us, it will afford some comfort that we are now going to be delivered entirely from them. For what must be parted with it will be prudent to contemplate on the unfavourable side, which may have better effect than we imagine to abate our reluctance.

6. Another shock proceeds from the strangeness of the thing, as being a thing entirely new, of which we have had no experience: for upon prospect of some difficulty to be gone through, it is usual to fortify ourselves with the remembrance of something similar we had sustained before, of which we know the issue, and have found a return of our former tranquillity and amusements. But here we have nothing in all our stores of memory wherewith to draw a comparison; and though we daily see others go before us

we can get no account from them how it fared with them either during their passage, or at the end of it. Yet this very circumstance of the passage being made every day may afford a substantial ground of comfort, not that an evil is the less to one man for having fallen upon others: if I break my leg, the pain is the same whether thousands beside or noboby break theirs; but because whatever dispensation is universal, cannot be an evil.

If we have been used to behold the course of affairs in this world with the well-wishing eye of benevolence, untainted with the prejudices of pride and selfishness, undervaluing whatever is not our own, we shall discern so many more joys than sorrows, so many more blessings than mischiefs abounding everywhere, as must convince us that the whole system is laid out with an unsparing bounty: and though there be some evils scattered here and there for wise ends, to us inscrutable, they bear a very inconsiderable proportion to the good, the provisions whereof are general, but those of evil for particular individuals.

Since then it is appointed all men once to die, and we may add all animals, who had no share in the sin of Adam, it must be ranked among those appointments which are the produce of bounty. Nor may we scruple to call the departure of our dearest friends in some sort an experience of our own: if we have esteemed them for their honesty, integrity, and good qualities, we shall not think them subjected in anger to the common lot, nor believe it so rigorous as imagination suddenly represents; if we have taken part in their joys and sorrows, sympathized in their affections, they will have been to us another self; occurrences happening to them will affect us the same as if happening to our own persons, and love and shame will help us to bear unreluctantly whatever we have seen them go through.

But imagination suggests a strangeness because it is appointed men to die once: is the particle Once, which makes the strangeness, a cause of complaint? What if it were appointed to die two or three times, and come to life again, that we might know what we have to go through when the last summons comes? Should we think the condition of life mended by this alteration? I fancy we should not accept of it if left to our option, for we are not very fond of a sickness though it do not prove mortal, and this would furnish us with some of the experience we want. For the worst of the passage, as I have observed before, is during the progress of the distemper, which those who have recovered from a very dangerous one have gone through, so they do know what it is: therefore many of us have already so far died and come to life again, as was needful for the present purpose of taking off the strangeness of the thing.

If there be anybody who still holds the old exploded doctrine of preexistence, it is pity but he should take such advantage from his peculiarity as it is capable of yielding him; and he may gather this reflection from it, that he has already died a thousand times in the course of his existence, perhaps as often as he has fallen asleep in this present life, yet he still finds himself in a condition to enjoy his being, endowed with powers and faculties suited to that purpose, without remembrance, yet likewise without want or regret of those he possessed in any former state. Therefore he may look upon death as equally familiar to him with sleep, only returning after much longer intervals, but the return of both having frequency enough to take out all strangeness from the thoughts of them. And that the plain man of common sense may not want a source of comfort open to the visionary speculatist, I shall remind him that he has already passed through the state

of the womb, to which the passage into this world must have been as new and strange, as the passage out can be; yet he got through it well, it was matter of congratulation among all who had any concern about him, is still remembered with some solemnity as a joyful event, and I suppose he has never once regretted his former situation, nor wished to get back again: from this experience he may draw courage to take his passage out of this life, and think himself only going to be born a second time.

7. With respect to the loss of our powers and ideas, it should be considered that those are valuable only as they serve for our help and direction in the supply of our wants, but when our necessary wants are gone, we may spare them without damage. What would our powers of walking avail us, when we have no ground to tread upon, nor unwieldy body to heave about from place to place? What good would our language do us, unless we might expect to meet with persons who could talk the same? How are we the worse for being unable to provide ourselves with sustenance, when we shall get rid both of our hunger and thirst? And for the removal of our ideas that must be rendered light by its being total, for when all are gone we can have no uneasy ones: our desires, cravings, wants, vexations, griefs, will be wiped away together with our knowledge of the means for relieving them. Were some of our ideas to remain, they might torment us with the reflection on those that are wanting: he that should retain an idea of his home with all the conveniences therein, but none of the way to get thither, or of his provisions for the table, without any remembrance of the places or means of procuring them, would be made miserable by the little knowledge he has left. Therefore our security lies in having the whole stock obliterated, because then we cannot be sensible of diminutions made in it, neither can we have a craving left after losing all conception of the objects that used to excite it.

But if our knowledge remained entire, it would become useless for want of the powers to be employed by it, and if both knowledge and powers were to stay, they could only spend themselves in fruitless exertions, having no longer the same materials and services to work upon whereto they were adapted: so it is better they should all go together, than that we should be left in a mutilated condition wherein the disabled parts must prove a burden and a grievance to those which still retained some degree of vigour. Indeed, during some part of the passage, we may find great inconvenience from the decay of our powers while we still have wants that might be relieved by them; but this cannot be of long duration, for insensibility soon follows weakness: therefore it would be highly imprudent to prepare for doubling the grievance by possessing our minds beforehand with an habitual dread of impotence, as a thing wretched in itself: we had no abilities nor understanding before birth, yet have fared well enough with them, and so may again at the end of life; the trouble can only be temporary and perhaps not that, if the decay of our activity, our judgment, and our senses, should keep even pace with one another.

8. But it is a melancholy thing to find our glass almost run out with only a few gleaning sands collected in the bottom point, for we have been used to consider time as our most precious treasure, the necessary basis to support all our other possessions; we have always pleased ourselves with the thoughts of having a plentiful stock before us, which makes us dejected when that pleasure is wrested away, by seeing it shrunk to an alarming smallness, how much soever we have been too wasteful while not perceiving it sensibly decay.

We have indeed a small allowance of it dealt us here, and much we have to do with it, therefore prudence should incline us to husband it well, that we may lose none of those uses and innocent amusements for which it was given us: yet if we have inured our desires to hang loose upon their objects, if we have learned a calm industry void of anxiety or eagerness in the prosecution of our schemes and pleasures, we shall feel no shock on seeing our career cut short, nor further space remaining to pursue them. For though the time for them be over, yet time itself is not exhausted, having the boundless ocean of eternity from whence to replenish his glass, larger than all the sands of the Atlantic, the Pacific, and every other sea together. Since then we have such an immense estate of time, we need not grudge the expense of fifty or three score years irrecoverably gone from us; for this trifling diminution no more leaves us the poorer, than a man of ten thousand pounds a year would be the poorer for having dropped a sixpence. Whoever bears this reflection in mind, will not wish to recall the years that have lapsed over him, nor be so apt as many people are to complain of seeing the rising generation grow up to shove them out of the world; the great boys at school do not make this complaint, because little ones are daily coming in to shove them out of their places; nor do travellers, when, on setting out again after having baited at an inn, they see other company coming in to take the commodious room and refreshments which they must now resign.

But this life is a school to prepare our faculties for other exercises than those set us here; it is a journey, or rather one stage of our journey through matter: we have our pleasures and our uses of the span allotted us, and welcome be all others to the pleasures and uses contained in their span. For that there are further uses than we can trace in all the transactions of passing here, I have before given reasons to evince; those uses then being answered, we want no more sand to keep our glass running, but may leave time to find another glass to conduct us onward, through our next stage. And this consideration well inculcated might encourage us against all fears of the glass breaking before quite run out, for God knows what uses we have to serve, and what length of time is requisite to complete them, and no doubt has so adapted our strength of constitution together with the courses of fortune respecting us to afford sufficient space for the purpose; therefore whenever we find the glass run out, or shed its sand, we may rest contented that the uses for which it was given are satisfied.

9. Nor is there just ground for more grievous disappointment at the glass breaking, because it is an event we have been always most careful to prevent; see the world in general solicitous to escape, and been taught from our infancy to make our principal concern, as being right and incumbent upon us so to do. It is certainly right to take all proper care of our preservation, and were to be wished that the voluptuous and debauched would give more attention than they do, to dangers which threaten the shortening of their days: but when we consider why it is right, we shall see that the laudableness of our cares does not exclude an indifference for their success, if they should prove ineffectual.

Life, considered barely in itself, is a thing indifferent, neither good nor evil; if the kings of Colen, as legends pretend, slept three hundred years in a cave, they must have been alive all that time, but were no more the better nor worse for being so, than if they had lain in a state of nonentity; but it is the enjoyments and uses of life that make its value, for since they

cannot be had when life is gone, the preservation of it is the first and necessary ingredient in our cares for them. There may be uses and enjoyments beyond, but of those we have no particular knowledge: all that we can know assuredly concerning them is, that there are certain preparatory measures needful to be taken here; which yields an additional reason for endeavouring to keep our station as long as we can, that we may have time to make the better preparation. But when there are visible uses to the public in departing therefrom, or the rules of duty carrying an irrefragable presumption of such uses demand, it is more laudable to sacrifice life with all its enjoyments, than still to retain a fondness for it: nevertheless, even upon these occasions it remains commendable to use all our skill and industry for escaping the danger, so far as consistent with our duty. For life appears a good to us, and rectitude consists in adhering steadily to whatever appears such in our best judgment: therefore our cares for self-preservation are justifiable, nor does it contradict the habit of practising them, that we acquiesce in an event which they could not turn aside.

We may look upon the shortening of life through our own negligence as a real evil, and if we make the prevention of this evil the object of our solicitude it will keep us constantly attentive to our preservation, and yet the approach of death when inevitable will not be the thing we have been accustomed to dread. We have acted right in warding it off while we could, for so long it was an evil, and we certainly do not wrong when it is forced upon us, for this is no act of ours: it must come some time or other, and we have no reason to believe it an evil whenever it comes without our own procurement. It is not unlikely there may be a critical time wherein it will be best for us to depart out of this world, because opening the best entrance into another; we know our lot here so far depended upon the time of its being cast upon us, as that we could not have been born with just the same constitution, natural parts, family nor fortune, at any other time; for as soon as the little fœtus is formed for the reception of a perceptive spirit, the laws of nature require that one should be lodged in it; therefore if our creation had not been made at that instant, we must have had a lodgement assigned us in some other body. And how know we that it may not be more material to fall upon the lucky moment for our second birth? for the spirit newly created was alike indifferent to occupy anybody, but this life being a preparation for the next, and the courses of it very various among us, we must go out of it very variously qualified, so that every station there will not suit us alike; therefore it is of great consequence to find our passage when there is a commodious station vacant, and the causes that prepare for our reception are operating.

It is not possible for us to know when those circumstances are favourable, but we must trust providence for having ordered the course of events in both worlds, most opportunely to tally with one another; and as the soul is created when there is a body capable of receiving it, so is it called out again when the most suitable station lies ready for its occupancy: therefore it would be extremely hazardous either to anticipate by our intemperance and negligence, or retard by our timidity, the time that has been chosen for us by a wise and beneficent patron; for by so doing we may chance to cast ourselves upon some uncomfortable spot, to which our preparations have been in no respect suited. Thus we see the preservation of life while the means of preservation are allowed us, and the willing resignation of it when they are withdrawn, are so far from being contradic-

tory sentiments, or the one a violent change from the other, that they both naturally rise together from the same principle, and coincide in their tendency to accomplish the same purpose.

10. The melancholy appearance of a lifeless body, the mansion provided for it to inhabit, dark, cold, close, and solitary, are shocking to the imagination; but it is to the imagination only, not the understanding, for whoever consults this faculty will see at first glance, that there is nothing dismal in all these circumstances: if the corpse were kept wrapped up in a warm bed with a roasting fire in the chamber, it would feel no comfortable warmth therefrom; were store of tapers lighted up as soon as day shuts in, it would see no objects to divert it; were it left at large, it would have no liberty, nor if surrounded with company, would be cheered thereby; neither are the distorted features expressions of pain, uneasiness, or distress. This every one knows and will readily allow upon being suggested, yet still cannot behold nor even cast a thought upon those objects without shuddering; for knowing that a living person must suffer grievously under such appearances, they become habitually formidable to the mind, and strike a mechanical horror which is increased by the customs of the world around us.

It is common to fright children into taking of their physic by telling them that else they must be put into the pit-hole; when grown up the tolling knell, the solemn pomp of funerals help to depress their spirits, the doleful countenances and discourses of other persons draw them by sympathy, and all the scenes of death are heightened by poets and rhapsodists. As for the pit-hole, I see no need of that in medicine, for if terrors are wanting, those of the rod might do full as well to make the potion go down: decency in burials indeed is practised in all civilized countries, nor is it an idle ceremony, because the omission of it might introduce a savageness and obduracy of temper, that would be dangerous to the living, therefore it is serviceable only to raise a feeling in the thoughtless, which may make them more helpful to persons in sickness or danger: but for such as have a sensibility and a sympathizing temper, it behoves them to take care this provision, salutary to the generality, do not become poisonous to them by stirring up a sympathy with the shrouded carcass, and tainting their imagination with a dread of being themselves one day the subject of a like doleful ceremony. It would be vain to use arguments here, for none are wanting, the understanding being already satisfied that there is no suffering within the coffin, wherewith to sympathize; the sore lies in the imagination, which is not to be dealt with by accumulating new arguments, but by continually running over in the mind what was known well enough to the reason before, that so it may be loosened from the hold gotten upon it by the senses, and brought to run in trains not suggested by external appearances.

Therefore it will be expedient often to contemplate the nature of our composition consisting of two parts, one of which serves only for a channel of conveyance or instrument for the other to perceive by, until by this practice we have familiarized our thoughts to the idea of a substance which is not body, nor an object of sight, or touch, or any sense, yet perceives whatever stands exhibited by the senses, which is properly ourselves, makes whatever else comes into vital union with it to be part of ourselves for the time, is capable of uniting with other portions of matter which then would become parts of us, and has no further concern with them when disunited again, but they no more remain parts of us than of any other person.

If we find these ideas too abstracted to make impression upon us, we may

aid them by experience of our senses; we know that limbs have been cut off, and then whatever treatment is bestowed upon them no more affects the former owner than it does a stranger: we daily see the slaughtered animal serving for our food, yet without apprehension of any hurt befalling them by the cuttings, the roastings, and flashings they undergo: why then should we fancy a dead man, pent up in a coffin, and laid in the grave, more miserable than a dead chicken, closed up in a pye and baking in the oven? Yet we shudder at the dead man's situation, thinking how dreadful it would be to us; so it certainly would if placed there alive, and so would the chicken's if put in with all its feathers on, before the neck was wrung: and both have been in a situation as little suited to our liking, one immersed in a slimy yolk inclosed in the shell, the other not much more agreeably lodged in the womb; yet the thought of that yields no apprehension of misery, though there then were senses to suffer by it: why then should we tremble at a condition where there are no senses to be affected at anything passing there? But whatever considerations we employ will not avail, by once or twice suggesting; we must be industrious to apply them upon every alarm starting up in the thought: for knowledge is not the thing we want here but faith, and persuasion being a habit, is neither to be weakened nor worked upon unless by repeated efforts made at proper seasons for bringing the ideas to run spontaneously in trains conformable to our knowledge, without disturbance from external appearances.

11. Nevertheless, after imagination is cured of anxiety for the body, as being devoid of all sense and ceasing to be a part of us, it will retain a solicitude for that part which still continues to be ourselves, lest it should utterly lose all powers of perception on losing the body which contained all the organs of sensation and repository of ideas within it; and this inability to comprehend what means of enjoyment or occupation we shall then have, strikes a horror upon the mind. For even the persuasion of happiness ordinarily does not satisfy, nor can scarce be entertained without prospect of some particular channel, through which that happiness may flow: pleasure in the abstract is not easily conceivable; when we go to frame an idea of it, we constantly think of something pleasant to the touch, or the taste, or some other of the senses, or to the reflection which draws all its materials from the fund of sensation: and when we try to raise an idea of pleasure where all those materials are withdrawn, there starts up a frightful phantom in its stead, made formidable by its confusedness, as having neither shape, nor colour, nor distinguishable mark for the thought to rest upon.

This difficulty will always perplex us, unless we have used ourselves to carry reflection beyond the immediate operation of the senses, and to distinguish the impression they strike upon the mind from the springs employed in striking it. We have pleasures of very various sorts with respect to their objects, and sometimes pass through very quick successions of them, yet with equal pleasure all the while: a man sits down to a dinner he likes extremely, when that is ended he chats awhile among agreeable company, he then takes a very diverting book, from which he goes directly to a concert, which terminates in a ball; his pleasure all along may be the same, though the sources of it have varied, which shows us that pleasure is something different from the causes exciting it, and may differ from itself in degree, but never in kind, though the causes continually differ in kind. We find our amusements cloy upon repetition, becoming first indifferent, then irksome from delightful they were before; the colours, the sounds, the savours, or whatever else was in the objects that amused us continue all along the same,

but nothing is more opposite than pleasure and pain; therefore since they can both be joined successively to the same sensations, they must be something different from them, capable of subsisting without them, and introducible by other channels. Yet whenever we receive either, there must be something acting upon us, for as the eye cannot see itself, so neither can the mind operate upon itself, but to have enjoyment must have some pleasurable object to affect it.

But why should we not conceive it may be so affected without aid of the bodily senses? Their ministry is necessary in this present state, because all our objects lying at a distance without us, could not reach our notice unless by their intervention: yet we may consider that perception is not taken at the eyes, or the ears, or the fingers' ends, they only propagate their motions to the particles of our sensory which strike us immediately with perceptions: and why cannot we imagine there may be other particles possessing the like quality without having their motions conveyed through a long complicated mechanism, so that the naked mind may have objects to perceive analogous to those furnishing our sensory? Or if this be hard of conception, it will be much less so to apprehend the mind not going out naked, but invested with a set of organs capable of transmitting notices from external objects, for the probability of which I have already given reasons drawn from the doctrine generally received upon the best authorities of this life, being a preparation for the next: so that we shall still have a channel of sensation to supply us with engagement; and though our new senses should be totally different from those we now possess, this need not disturb us, for having an idea of sensation to work upon, we do not want a ground whereon to fix our idea of enjoyment. A man born blind can form no conception of the pleasures we know are received by sight, neither can a child in the womb of the various enjoyments in life, nor yet an infant of most of the tastes and gratifications belonging to manhood; thus we have experience of creatures capacitated to receive pleasures upon a change in their organs, of which they are not now capable of forming any distinct idea; which may help us to comprehend the easier, how we may still find matter to occupy us in the use of new senses, unknown to mortal man.

Nevertheless, for a further aid to our imagination, it has been common to employ sensible images for figuring the condition we may stand in; but since some people have stumbled at the descriptions of angels with wings, or creatures shaped and sized like ourselves, whether with gross bodies or flimsy, unsolid textures, if they find the vehicular hypothesis better suited to their taste, they are welcome to the suggestions I have offered concerning it; only let them not be mortified at their minuteness, for we judge of magnitude by ourselves; children think grown persons huge creatures, and we call them little creatures; whatever diminutive size we may be reduced to, no doubt we shall esteem ourselves proper persons: if a thousand of us can creep into a grain of corn, we shall not fancy ourselves mites for all that, but the corn swoln into an enormous mountain, abounding with spacious caverns where we may ramble about commodiously.

12. Yet how difficult soever we find it to form a clear idea of pleasure in the abstract, nothing is more easy than to apprehend pain and uneasiness without any particular object wherewith to concrete them; which makes imagination so prone to forebode mischief in uncertainty, being then reduced to abstractions it can readily find the idea of pain among them, but nothing to counterbalance it. But pain cannot befall without some agent to hurt us, and some organ to convey the hurt; for a man whose senses are

stupified, is incapable of receiving any; which shows that pain is in its nature as little fitted for an abstract idea as enjoyment, and our being able to conceive it more readily must be owing to custom, which makes the hardest things easy; from whence we may gather encouragement to try whether by prudently habituating our minds to the thought, we cannot attain a lively conception of happiness too in the abstract, without knowledge of any particular species of enjoyments whereof it is to consist: for this is a more desirable persuasion than that of the Vehicles or Mundane Soul, which though to me appearing a very probable hypothesis, still is but hypothesis.

If we proceed to examine how we come to fall into the practice of abstracting pain rather than pleasure, we may perceive it introduced by the narrowness of our desires confining us to their several objects; therefore when a pleasure is proposed, we are willing to learn something particular about it, that we may know whether it be suitable to our taste, for else we would not give a farthing for it; but all uneasiness is disgustful to us, therefore when any threatens, we do not use to inquire further what species it is, before we feel an aversion to it. Then our enjoyments for the most part require a long train of measures to be taken beforehand for their procurement, which must be laid upon consideration of the particular sources from whence they are to be had; the steps by which we advance towards them become themselves pleasant to the thought, which commonly loves to run in that channel, and perhaps receives a larger sum of amusement in prosecution of them, than from the pleasure at the end. But mischiefs surround us on all quarters, so it is necessary to keep up a general caution, ready to take alarm against whatever danger approaches: if twenty pleasures offer, we fix upon one in preference to all the rest; if twenty evils threaten us, we want to escape them all; we hunt about for the sources of pleasure when they do not present of their own accord, but we do not choose to think on the causes of uneasiness, unless when needful to guard against them.

But the same caution which is our safeguard here, can do us no service when we have new organs and a new set of objects to deal with: for we know not what dangers to watch for, nor what to take alarm at, therefore may safely discard our fearfulness as being wholly unavailing: and having observed from whence it proceeds, namely, from the narrowness of our desires, this will point out one way of curing it. I have before recommended the multiplying our desires as much as possible, striving to be pleased with everything, and to possess a contented mind, which is always a happy mind in every situation; if we have practised this method, we shall gain a more general and abstract idea of pleasure, not confined to a few particular species of it, and become less apt to take alarm merely from the uncertainty of our prospect, without some apparent ground making it prudent so to do.

And in order to satisfy ourselves that a state of uncertainty is not necessarily a state of terror, we may consider that children and animals have no foresight of the pleasures and pains that will befall them; but you will say, they have no sense of danger nor knowledge of the accidents whereto they are liable: true, but we who do know they are so liable, yet are not affrighted for them upon the mere uncertainty, unless we see some particular danger impending. We may reflect likewise that we have never yet lived in a state of absolute security, but know ourselves continually liable to dangers and changes of situation, of which we can have no clear apprehension what they may produce, yet have been able to possess our minds in

tranquillity, notwithstanding: from whence we may learn to familiarize our thoughts to a dependence upon fortune in matters whereof we have no light given us to help ourselves. For what appears to us chance or fortune, is indeed a regular series of causes, bound up in one system with the laws of nature: and we see how nature provides suitable accommodations for every species of animals as soon as she brings them into life, by which experience duly attended to we may turn our uncertainty into an assurance, that whatever our wants and capacities shall be in the next state of life, she has made the like provision for our suitable accommodation there.

Nor need we fancy our being left uncertain with respect to what particular sensations, objects, and employments will be assigned us, as an effect of diskindness; for if we had such particular knowledge, it must interrupt us in the duties of our station, we should be perpetually ruminating on the scenes before us instead of attending to the business in hand, and upon any little distaste we might be tempted to end our lives before the appointed time: therefore it is a blessing that we are allowed no further insight into futurity than to discern that our condition there depends upon the prudent management of our own truest interests, and those of our fellow-creatures, upon earth: this is enough, if borne enough in mind, to keep us steady in our proper occupation here, and open an exhilarating though indistinct prospect of an hereafter.

13. By such considerations we can easily satisfy our minds for a season, but the difficulty lies in preserving the vigour of their influence unimpaired at all seasons, for there are some wherein we find ourselves very apt to suspect the justness of our former reasonings. Fear will often hang on a dead weight of prejudice, as well as hope: what we eagerly wish, we can believe upon no foundation; and what we vehemently dread, appears a certain evil while there remains a possibility of imagining that it may come. In this case we commonly set ourselves with all our might to hunt for argument in support of our terror, and impress them in strongest colours upon the mind: if any one goes to quiet us, we expect a demonstration that shall force upon us, in spite of our utmost resistance, a glare of light to strike through our eyelids when we shut them against it. This partiality of fear springs from a like partiality to our desires, and our indolence; we are conscious of having made hasty decisions either because they humoured our wishes, or to avoid the trouble of further examination, which brings an utter discredit upon our judgment, so that we can never tell when to trust it, but become incredulous by knowing that we have always been too credulous before.

Having found what raises this barrier round our fears rendering them inaccessible on all quarters, it behoves us to guard against the workings of indolence and partiality of desire, to prevent the mischief that will be very hard to remedy. We may remember that absolute certainty was not made for man, and learn to content ourselves without it: our clearest evidences do not give their full lustre at once, until we have examined them on all sides, and observe what other evidences there may be to weaken their force: as our business lies with probabilities, it will be needful to practise the art of ascertaining their degrees, that we may become expert in weighing them fairly, and discerning when there is a visible preponderancy. If we have inured ourselves to this method so that it is grown habitual, we shall pass no judgment upon matters we do not understand, and where we do pass a judgment shall be able to confide in its decisions with an unreserved assent and moral assurance not easily susceptible of doubts and misgivings. All

that remains to be done is by frequently reviewing the determinations of our reason to fix them strongly upon the imagination, that they may rise there spontaneously in their full colours, whenever wanted; whereby conviction will be turned into persuasion, and if it were upon a point of importance, will become an article of Faith.

But faith is never so steadfast as when first grounded on solid rational conviction, after having stood the test of the strictest scrutiny that each man has capacity or opportunity to go through: therefore one should be desirous to have the reality of a Providence, that corner stone of all Faith, fully discussed, and every argument that can be suggested in opposition to it fairly examined, that there may remain no suspicion of our having been drawn into the belief of it by the torrent of custom, or our judgment biassed by a secret partiality, for partiality will have an influence here as well as in other matters.

Many persons fond of an uncontrolled liberty of indulging their passions have been drawn into the disbelief of a God by their earnest desire that there were none: but the Lucretian comfort is none to me, for not to mention that the prospect of annihilation appears to my thinking no very comfortable prospect, nor that my notion of the individuality of every perceptive Being is utterly repugnant to the production of one by a coalition of imperceptive atoms, I say, stepping over these difficulties and supposing it demonstratively proved, that a certain composition of matter might become a reasonable creature, I should not yet be freed from my fears, nor find a salve for them in the thoughts of annihilation. For I should presume that whatever power had created me once, might create me again after being annihilated; if a certain lucky assortment of corpuscles could produce me into being before when I was not existent, what should hinder but that another assortment may produce me from non-existence into being a second time? And the several assortments working this effect may be very different for aught I know, for I see no necessary connection between my personality and any particular atoms, or particular position of them among one another. This composition, which goes by the name of Edward Search, might have constituted some other person with still the same material substance, the same texture of brain and sensibility of organs, if chance had so happened: in this case the same Chapters would have been written, and the same enjoyments of life passed through, yet I should have had no share in either, but might perhaps have not been at all, or been some other among those many millions of compositions forming men and animals, each having their respective personalities, their respective volitions, and feelings distinct from those of every other. In like manner among those innumerable sentient compositions which shall continue to be formed after my annihilation, what assurance have I that my personality may not be annexed to some one of them, so that I may become a Spanish negro, a prisoner in the inquisition, a toad, an adder, or spider, or something more vile and miserable than human experience has yet known, or imagination figured? And all this to depend upon a blind unfeeling inconsiderate chance; which presents a most alarming prospect, involved in darkness, uncertainty, and horror.

Therefore it appears to me an extremely desirable thing, that there should be a Providence extending to all the regions I can possibly be cast upon hereafter, as well as this I now inhabit: and knowing that I have this prejudice, I stand constantly upon my guard against it, lest it should draw me to admit proofs in favour of what I wish too hastily, before having examined them to the bottom, and given a fair hearing to whatever my

own thoughts, or the ingenuity of other persons may suggest, in opposition. For I want to lay in a stock of solace, which shall not fail me in time of need: my reasonings I cannot expect to continue when the weakness of distemper, the consternation of some fatal accident, or the debilities of old age shall alarm me with a near prospect of my end; some conclusions from my former reasonings I may retain, and am willing to have my confidence in them strengthened by the consciousness of having drawn them with the utmost impartiality and caution. This consciousness I apprehend is in everybody's power to secure; for though all have not the same leisure from the duties of their station to pursue their examination equally far, yet all may proceed with care and impartiality so far as they have opportunities to go, and if they cannot dive to the bottom themselves, they may confide in the judgment of all sober and judicious persons, whom they will find unanimous upon this article.

14. The diffidence of our reasonings proceeds, I apprehend, not so much from flaws discovered in them, as from the want of colours wherewith to paint the conclusions resulting from them, so as to appear clearly visible to our imagination; for they lead into such as are not at all conformable to our experience, nor the scenes exhibited by our senses. For our senses being the first inlets of all our knowledge, we having recourse to their decision upon all difficulties wherever we can (whence comes the saying, that seeing is believing,) and being continually conversant with their objects, we find a difficulty in conceiving an idea, that is not made up of materials drawn from them.

With us, not seeing, or not finding a thing capable of being seen, is disbelieving; whatever is such as no man has had experience of, nor can easily be represented to the imagination, seems a vision, an absurdity, a nothing, which no proofs can support. When told of a substance we think it must be something that can be felt, for common language appropriates the epithet substantial to things for their hardness or compactness, therefore we say roast beef is good substantial food, but water-gruel not; and hence it appears unintelligible jargon to talk of a substance that is not the object of any sense. We distinguish the persons of men by their outward appearance, and by their characters and sentiments discoverable in their looks, words, and actions, so have no notion of a person separated from all those organs of motion, and means of expression, whereby they are made known to us. We see that men have eyes to see with, ears to hear, and fingers to touch, and know that if there be any obstruction in those avenues the sensation cannot enter, therefore have no comprehension how there can be perception without any of those inlets; for a sixth sense must be an extravagance because nobody ever met with, or heard of a creature possessing it.

We can scarce give entrance to the thought of a Providence working imperceptibly without any of those sensible operations we employ in all our performances: we want to see visible appearances giving motion to massy bodies, to hold discourse with the secret agent, to call for particular events at our pleasure, or at least to find changes made in matter which could not have been effected by any natural powers. Our knowledge of nature extends no further than those qualities of bodies or compositions of bodies falling under our observance, so have no archetypes from whence to draw the image of another nature, proceeding by different laws with differently qualified materials; but the thought revolts against every suggestion of this sort, as unnatural and fantastic.

Nevertheless, the senses themselves lead us to the knowledge of something that is not their object if we lay their notices together, for the eye

which sees can hear nothing, the ear which hears can see nothing, and the finger which touches can neither see nor hear, but it is the same something which sees, and hears, and feels, and this something must be distinct from the organs which are wholly destitute of each other's sensations, and must be a real substance; for what is not so, can no more feel than be felt. B we esteem the organs parts of ourselves, because we can have no perception of their objects without them: no more can I touch the ceiling without a long pole, nor see the satellites of Jupiter without a telescope; yet I never think them parts of myself, because I can do the same by taking another glass, or without either if I could be raised up near enough to the objects; so that which is capable of perceiving by the organs I now have, may as well be capable of perceiving by other organs wherewith it may hereafter be invested, or perhaps without any organs at all, if the objects which lie at a distance withoutside the body should be brought within the sphere of its perception.

Or if the idea of a purely spiritual substance be too thin for imagination to take hold on, we may easier comprehend what is not improbable to be the real case, that we have a minute but completely formed body within the grosser, fixed in the centre of our nerves, like a little spinner in the centre of his web, who, as Pope says, feels in each thread and lives along the line, with this difference, that the spinner's web hangs in the yielding air incapable of molesting it, whereas our's runs interwoven among the solid bones, the stiff muscles, and other carneous parts, which yet are disposed in such wonderful contrivance as not to hinder or obstruct its vibratiuncles, so that notwithstanding their incumbrance we still can feel in each thread and live along the line. While the spinner remains in this situation, perhaps his sensations all appear received at the further extremities of his threads; he lives only along the line, nor perceives himself living or existing anywhere else: yet if you detach him from thence to put him upon a leaf, you can easily imagine how he may run about with his little legs, and receive variety of perceptions without any of his threads.

Then if we consult experience concerning the phenomena apparent to our senses, she will inform us that matter cannot begin an operation without an impulse received from elsewhere; for nothing is so contrary to experience as that a stone should jump and dance about of itself, without any impulsive force to move it; or to reason, as that the particles of air, of fire, or circulating juices in plants and animals should do the same: she likewise tells us, that bodies by their contrary motions may, and continually do, destroy one another's impulses, but can never renew them; that we ourselves never act without motives and ideal causes impressed upon us by the operations of matter; therefore that all the action we behold around us, must derive originally from some other agent than matter, or the spirits of men: So that as on touching upon some desolate island, if we found avenues of large trees and ruins of buildings, we should say we saw the hand of man in them, although the men whose works they were had been gone many years ago; in like manner, on beholding the course of affairs in this world, we may say with equal propriety, that we see the finger of God therein, although we know not at what remote distance of time that finger gave the touch. And though all nature in our comprehension be comprised in the properties of elementary and other bodies coming within our notice, yet being satisfied that the form of it was established by the choice and energy of the First Cause, there seems no great difficulty in apprehending, that the same agent may have established another nature with elements, compounds, and machineries, totally different from any we have yet had experience of.

But it will not suffice for our purpose to run over these contemplations only now and then upon extraordinary occasions; we must endeavour to habituate and familiarize them to our thoughts, that they may occur spontaneously at any intervals of immersion among sensible objects, yet without interruption to the business in hand; which is a branch of that expertness and ease mentioned in § 13 of CHAP. XXI. [p. 381 of this volume], of interspersing serious reflections among common transactions without solemnity; for if we have gained this faculty, we may find many opportunities, without impediment to any business or diversion going forward, to cast a transient thought upon the probability of the multitudes who have passed off this worldly stage, and particularly our own departed friends, being at that instant as deeply engaged in occupations suitable to their situation, as we are. By frequent practice of this sort we may loosen our attachment to the objects of sense, yet not abate that attention to them which the duties of our present station require, but inure imagination to entertain other ideas besides, which then will not appear strange nor hard of conception in seasons when we shall want them for our solace, and to occupy the places of such as would only fill us with regret.

15. Yet after all our cares there may still remain an aptitude of certain terrors to rise spontaneously we know not why, either forced upon us by the impression of external objects, or starting up mechanically in the imagination without fresh grounds of alarm to the understanding. For the senses many times affect the mind by an immediate operation: beauty inclines to love, deformity to aversion, nastiness sets our stomachs a kecking, elegance and active scenes make us cheerful, close gloomy caverns deject our spirits, and the discoursing or reflection upon those things will have a proportionable effect. So the appearance of graves, or skeletons, or any thing that puts us in mind of death, or even expressions and single words relative thereto, strike the eye and ear with a sudden horror, though not foreboding any particular danger to ourselves.

This effect does not proceed from nature, but from early custom, our second nature, for there is no more reason either logical or physiological to be given, why the sight of a human skull and bones in a charnel-house should shock us more than the sight of a calve's head or a pair of marrow-bones in a dish, for both are emblems alike significant to remind us, that all animals must die; but we have been used from our infancy to be affrighted at the one and familiarized to the other.

When the wheels of imagination have been once set to this play, they will renew it again of their own accord, without any external appearance or visible cause to put them a-going. Yet there are several causes frequently not adverted to, where it might prove no small comfort to know them: indigestion, thickness or poorness of blood, east winds, changes of weather, want of proper exercise, or engaging employment, to which we may add a stagnation or weariness of thought. For there are people who perpetually puzzle their brains yet can scarce be said ever to think at all, for they fix upon one idea and find no currency nor issue to their thoughts; so they weary themselves without making any progress, and then take the uneasy sensation of this weariness for something terrible in the idea they contemplate. I take this to be the case many times with persons righteous overmuch, who believing themselves under an obligation to think on serious subjects longer than their natural strength will bear, fall into mechanical despondences, that would be better prevented by a seasonable recreation as soon as they perceive them coming on.

Therefore it behoves us to study our constitution thoroughly, that we may know when the disorder lies in the mind itself, springing from grounds of danger apparent to our understanding, and when it is only sympathetic of a disorder in the body; the latter may be borne with the same resignation as we do other natural evils; for the spirit of a man will bear his infirmities, but a wounded spirit what shall support? by knowing the true place of the wound, we shall prevent its ulcerating the mind herself, nor be ready to think ourselves undone because the springs of our machine happen to be a little discomposed. But a disorder of the machine, even in the organs of imagination, cannot be cured by arguments: you might as well think of haranguing a man out of a fever, as go to vanish his scruples arising from that cause by the remonstrances of reason: the patient must help himself, and since his malady sprung from habit, he must try to acquire a contrary habit, taking care in the first place to avoid every occasion of encouraging the old one. Therefore it will be dangerous to deal much with gloomy writers, tragical representations, or doleful tales, or to converse with persons that have a knack of giving everything a melancholy turn, or to indulge a humour of being ruffled at accidents; for there is a near affinity between vexation and fear, the habit of making ourselves soon uneasy by the one, will render us more susceptible of uneasiness from the other; as on the contrary, if we have been accustomed to possess our minds in tranquility and even tenor under some situations, we shall the readier learn the art of doing the like under the rest.

Nevertheless, it is but a temporary expedient to shut out the thought of our terrors, or try to laugh them off; for when reduced to the company of doctor, apothecary, and nurse, we shall have no stomach to laugh, nor veil to cover the reflections which then will force in upon us; therefore the abstinence from melancholy subjects I recommended just now is only to prevent aggravation of our distemper; as for that degree of malady we have already, it will be more prudent to probe it to the bottom, to examine frequently the grounds of all our apprehensions at the brightest calmest seasons when we can do it impartially, that they may not give a double shock in coming upon us by surprise, to store up carefully whatever comfortable topics may occur or be suggested, impressing them often upon the imagination until it becomes habituated thereto, to catch what courage we can by sympathy and imitation from such as have it, and choose the conversation of persons who can discourse on solemn subjects with seriousness, and yet with tranquillity and cheerfulness.

16. The last source of terror upon quitting this mortal stage is that of an after reckoning; and this I can offer no solid arguments to remove where there is just cause to apprehend it will terminate in our disfavour. For how much soever I have spoken of an equality among all perceptive creatures upon computation made of their enjoyments and sufferings throughout the whole extent of their existence, this does not hinder great inequalities in the several stages of it; and the stage of being we are next to enter upon, may have a duration exceeding our powers of arithmetic, which makes it an eternity to us, and we are taught to look upon it as such by the best authorities: if there be a third life still beyond, we know of nothing to be done here for affecting our condition therein; so our most important and whole concern lies with that immediately succeeding the present. And the only way to remove our apprehensions upon this article, is by a rational piety, and sound sentiments concerning our relation to God and our fellow-creatures, exemplified in the practice of good works, to re-

move the causes of them: for though Faith or an habitual right disposition of mind be the saving principle, yet the man who pretends to have Faith but never shows it in his actions, deceives himself, and the truth is not in him.

Nevertheless, as there are misapprehensions concerning the saving Faith, which sometimes occasion very terrifying scruples, I shall offer my idea of it, which whoever pleases may examine in time of health, making such alterations and amendments therein as he shall find reasonable, and store in mind for his use in time of trial. This Faith then I apprehend to consist in sound sentiments of the divine Attributes, a firm persuasion and trust in the goodness of God, an habitual bent of mind to refer all things to his Glory manifested in the happiness of his creatures, or a hearty disposition to give the greater good a preference before private interest, appetite, and passion, styled in Scripture language coming to the Father; together with such other points of belief as stand so connected with the former, that it cannot be attained nor act vigorously without them, called in the same language passing through the Son.

As for many particulars more strongly stickled for in the Christian world, they seem to me no parts of the thing we are describing; but whoever believes the word of Christ to be the word of God, and that by carefully exercising his reason thereupon he shall find a sure direction for bringing him to the father, needs no further belief unless such as will strengthen and keep him firm in this. For I have observed in the Chapter on the Trinity, that these are the remote fundamentals which serve like gates and ramparts to protect and conduct into the essentials: in a siege all the fighting is at the outworks, which as mankind stands circumstanced it is necessary to defend strenuously for sake of the city within: but having no intrinsic value, it is likewise necessary to cast a greater degree of awe and sacredness upon them, because else you cannot make the plain man sensible of their importance, as you can the moral and theological virtues which have a worth of their own explainable to his understanding. But how safe and prudential soever it may be during the course of our lives to exert a proper vigour in the maintenance of these remote fundamentals, I conceive zeal for forms and staunch orthodoxy no solid ground of comfort in the hour of death, nor of defence in the day of judgment.

I shall remark further, that Faith, whatever be the proper object, is a habit, not a single act; for the one may subsist while the other cannot be exerted: a man may have a true fondness for hunting or other diversion, yet find no relish for it at particular times when his stomach is full, or his body indisposed; so he may have a real Faith though scarce able to make a faint exercise of it, through some weakness or indisposition of his organs, therefore had better take his estimate from the tenor of his past conduct, than from the present colours in his imagination.

But who can have the testimony of a conscience void of offence? For in many things we offend all, where it was possible for us to have acted better: but we must distinguish between what is possible, and what is practicable; every failure of our duty must be in instances where it was in our power to have done otherwise, for what is not in our power cannot be a duty; yet it is impracticable in this vale of mortality constantly to use our power well, so as to perform an unsinning obedience; this perfection is reserved for those who shall inherit the kingdom of the just, and be completely saved from the original sinfulness of human nature; to which state

we can only make some short advances here. For, as observed in the Chapter on Redemption, we are none of us completely saved in this life, having not attained that character of perfect endurance and forbearance which must put us into possession of salvation; yet may not improperly be said to be saved by being entered into a sure way that will conduct us thereto: and if we have continually struggled with our inordinate appetites, and been overcome by them only by surprise or through natural imbecility without deliberate consent of the mind, and have a sincere love of rectitude as a thing desirable of itself without regard to the punishments escaped by it, there is no cause to be affrighted; for there is mercy with God as well as justice; the one flows voluntarily from him, but the other is drawn by the exigencies of the creation: and I hope many a man can have the testimony of his conscience for so much as this amounts to. This testimony will find the fairer reception if we have used ourselves to an openness of heart and willingness to think well of other persons; for it is much easier to believe that God is good to many, than to a chosen few; but the rigorous and narrow-minded throw so many difficulties in the way of salvation, that they can never be sure of having surmounted them themselves: thus it is true in this case that with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again; and I believe the doctrine of the strait gate, as vulgularly understood, has been the source of many disquietudes, which might be removed by the exposition given in the Chapter last cited, yet without abating our vigilance and industry in striving to enter it.

If there should still remain a suspicion that being on our departure, but in the road to salvation not entirely delivered from the corruption of our nature, we may still continue liable to some evils and severe exercises to perfect us completely, let us consider that we shall at least be delivered from those troubles which oppress us here: and if there be others of another kind needful to be gone through, we may be content to take our share with the rest of our fellow travellers, and may as we proceed onward in our progress be able to bear them better than any we have sustained here; yet not with the Stoical presumption of blunting the edge of them by our sturdiness; for evil were no evil, nor could answer the secret purposes rendering it necessary to be suffered, if the mind were so steeled as not to feel it, but confiding in the Goodness of God that he will lay no burden upon us greater than we shall be able to bear.

17. I have now done my best towards unravelling that texture of terrors which render the thoughts of death so dreadful, and pointing out the topics of consideration by which we may know how to deal with them, and prevent their entangling among one another again. But let no man expect to find a cure upon once giving me the hearing: he had better use what he sees here as hints for giving scope to his own thoughts; for our own imaginations and our understandings are as variously formed as the features of our faces, so that the same object which strikes upon one person with the most forcible colours, scarcely touches another; whatever he can draw from his own sagacity and observation will do him more service than a thousand arguments suggested by anybody else, because they will not so readily coincide and join with his usual trains of thinking to make his system all of a piece. Only I beg leave to warn him once more, to keep clear of his But thens, and pursue his reflections upon one source of alarm to the end, before he gives admission to a second; for while he suffers them to break in upon one another, he will never come to an end with any of them.

And I flatter myself that he may find encouragement in the foregoing

sections, to enter upon the task with a resolution to make it one principal business of his life; for while the fear of death, which may be stifled during health by a continual round of engagements, is apprehended only for the uneasiness it may occasion for a few days or a few hours on the near approach of his end, he may think it scarce worth while to give himself much trouble or much interruption to the course of his pleasures for sake of escaping so transitory an evil. But upon being put in mind here what methods and habits of thinking are needful to secure him quiet in the day of danger, he will see that by escaping a transient evil he will attain a positive and substantial good, for that many of them will help him to pass his time more usefully and satisfactorily in this world, and promote his interests in the next.

For our abhorrences and tormenting passions, as well as the soothing, were designed for our benefit, that in struggling with them we may not only deliver ourselves from their tyrany, but gain the Spolia Opima, the richest spoils, in an accession of strength to our spiritual body from the contest. Fear of Death was given to man for its usefulness: for I may style it given although not innate but the child of custom, because the course of affairs in the moral world which introduced the custom that generated it, lay under the disposal of Providence, and it has other uses besides those answered collaterally in the endeavours to master it. It is commonly said, a man who values not his own life has every other man's in his power, so that if there were not a sense of self-preservation which makes the law formidable by its capital punishments, there could be no order nor government, the number of housebreakers and banditti must increase, a great part of mankind would become savage beasts, the more dangerous by how much they have the more cunning.

The dread of death proves likewise some little check to intemperance when the excesses of it have brought them into apparent danger: it makes them compassionate to sickness and accident, for they seldom pity another for the tooth-ache, or other complaint that puts the life to no hazard, to strengthen which sympathizing temper is the use of burial ceremonies, and it puts the giddy upon thoughts of Religion and another world, which would never enter their heads amid the bustle of amusements without some powerful alarm to force a passage: nor is it unavailing to anybody so far as it urges him to exert his endeavours to overcome it, not by shutting his eyes against it, for this is more a cowardly flight than a brave conquest, but by taking the proper measures to turn the dreadful object into a harmless one. The cry of Memento mori is generally thought a dismal sound, and so indeed it is become through the indiscretion or artifices of those who make it loudest in such manner as increases the natural terrors of mankind, that they may govern them the more easily in the confusedness of their minds. Hermits and holy men are described sighing over death's heads, sobbing and groaning at their being men and not angels, practising austerities and self-denials without intermission.

But why do we need a death's head for a memento, when every churchyard, every probate of a will, every newspaper, or wall of a hundred years old, nay, every butcher's or poulterer's shop we pass by, might do as well, if we turned them that way in our thoughts. If we perceive a use in any particular exercise of austerity or self-denial, either for our future ease in this world, or preparation for the next, let us go through it manfully in God's name, with a view to the advantage to be gained thereby, as we encourage ourselves to any other laborious or disagreeable task by prospect of

the profit expectant therefrom; but why need we afflict our bodies, only to deject our spirits, and double the horror of that which is formidable enough already?

18. For we shall do well to examine the uses of every measure before we employ it, and know why we wish to keep ourselves and others constantly in mind of our mortality; the memento mori serves first to strike a terror upon the thoughtless, not for the sake of tormenting them, but to bring them into a habit of serious consideration: this point once gained, the memento deserves still to be continued, not to increase their terrors which now are become needless, having already answered their purpose, but with a contrary view, namely, to allay them by so familiarizing the object to their thought, that they may be subject to none of those mechanical alarms which shock with their suddenness and their strangeness, and by connecting them in train with other lightsome objects which shall take out all the dismal colours. For people who seldom think of death, when forced upon it, can think of nothing else, it so fills their imagination; whereas, when used to the reflection, it overwhelms with no confusedness, but leaves room and even introduces other ideas of more pleasurable aspect, so that they can think calmly and cheerfully while thinking most seriously.

Therefore our endeavours ought to tend to make the memento mori a memento renasci or memento vivere, that the remembrance of our being to die may suggest a remembrance of our being to be born into some other state, and of the manner wherein we are to lay our plan of conduct for this present life. For which purpose it may not be unserviceable to entertain the idea of an Aion, journey through matter, consisting of several stages whereof the passage through this visible world is one, but divisible into the under stages of gestation, childhood, and manhood.

On our expulsion from the womb we left at once all the provisions for our warmth, for our sustenance, for our circulation, necessary to our support there: in that state we were formed and fashioned with members fitted for the conveniences we now find in them; our eyes and ears and curious organs of sense were fabricated, of no use to us there, but to be of signal service afterwards; it may be presumed we had some pleasurable sensations, some enjoyment of life, and some pains which prompted to many little motions beginning that suppleness of joints and agility of limbs from whence we now reap so continual advantage. In our childhood we were sent to school or apprenticeship, or some other method of preparation for the succeeding stage of life, for I suppose nobody who was assured his son could not live beyond fourteen, would ever think of subjecting him to the discipline of a school: we had our holidays and amusements allowed us there, and have passed our time agreeably, insomuch that many look upon that as the happiest part of our lives: the pleasures permitted us there, were not only compatible with our learning, but had their uses too with respect to our condition of manhood, as they invigorated our health, enlivened our spirits, and whetted our sagacity by the little contrivances we practised to enhance them.

Thus by reflection on the stages we have already passed through as parts in the whole line of our visible existence, we may habituate our minds to the idea of this too being the part of a much longer line to run on through many centuries: as upon what passed with us before birth depends our constitution, our natural talents, the limbs, muscles, and fibres which are the sole instruments of our action now, and what passed with us under the schoolmaster, supplied us with the degree of expertness we reap the benefit

of in our present occupations; so it is not unlikely that what passes with us now, may contribute to the formation of organs and faculties capable of being employed to better purpose, a hundred years hence. In our infancy we had no notion of the improvements then going forward for our subsequent benefit, and in our youth we could have little more in prospect than the rules and directions prescribed, without discerning the expedience of them; but as the judgment ripens we can discover grounds for the community of interests, and see that our proper direction for attaining a good, unknown in the remaining stage of our Aion, is by doing apparent good to ourselves or others, great or small as opportunity serves, for we are members of the community whose interests we are to consult; and true industry will attend to little profits in default of greater, be it only of a present amusement, which is a mite added to the stock of happiness.

Therefore the memento is serviceable for keeping us steady in this track that we may not run a gadding after our fond desires without considering whether any mischievous consequences may ensue. For if by help of this monitor we have been accustomed to carry our references to the glory of God manifested in the good of his creatures, and to receive the enjoyments of life as the bounties of a gracious Father, indulgent even to our humours when they can be indulged without hurt, should anybody set a death's head before us while busied in our lawful occupations or even in our pleasures that have had licence from our sober judgment, it would be so far from proving an interruption or damping of them, that we might be ready to say, this is nothing new to me, for this I had in my thoughts before when laying the plan I am now pursuing.

19. Whoever once reflects that the improvements needful for his well-being in the remaining part of his Aion, are not to be worked by single acts, but an habitual turn of sentiment, and considers how much attention and perseverance are requisite to gain a habit, will not care to lose sight of his memento, lest he should thereby lose all his opportunities till the last moments, when there will not be time for the business he has to do; for if he delays at all, there is a great chance he will delay till then. Procrastination is a habit which like other habits gathers strength by every repeated indulgence; so that if you put off your work to-day, you will stand more inclined to put it off to-morrow. Not that I or anybody will deny, that a habit may be broken or created by one violent impulse of something operating strongly upon the imagination: a burnt child dreads the fire, being cured once for all of the habit of playing with it: but this very rarely happens, and is never to be depended on, upon several accounts.

For there is great hazard of having no opportunity in the last moments: many are cut off by sudden accidents, apoplexies, palsies, and other disorders giving no warning; others will not take warning, still flattering themselves to the last, or being flattered by their attendants with hopes of a recovery; most distempers come accompanied with pains and bodily uneasinesses which engross the whole attention, or if the body be tolerably quiet, they darken and weaken the faculties of the mind: so that perhaps there is not one in a hundred who on the last day of their present stage have it in their power to do anything effectually for their advantage in the next. And if an opportunity be afforded it is generally wrested away again by other engagements, the care of settling temporal affairs, the solicitude for destitute children, the vexation of schemes broken off abruptly, the memento now forced in with a sudden shock and appearing in a terrible

strangeness, so confuse the mind, that she has no judgment nor calmness to take care of her own concerns.

But supposing sufficient warning, ease of body, clearness and strength of mind, leisure, calmness, freedom from all interruptions, and everything else you can wish but have no reason to expect, how can you be secure that your repentance will be sincere, that it will be a true metanoia, a thorough change of sentiments and desires? For when destruction hangs over you just ready to seize, your sorrow may be attrition only, not contrition, an abhorrence of the punishment, not of the courses leading into it, without a spark of love to God, but in servile submission and dread of his vengeance, without any inclination to virtue, though you wish ardently to have followed it because you wish to escape the mischiefs that might have been prevented thereby. For though fear be the beginning of wisdom, it is not perfect so as to answer any good purpose, until the aversion first belonging to the object of fear is completely transferred upon works of folly, and turned into a hearty desire of wisdom; but you can never be certain it is so, until you have had experience of the aversion and desire subsisting at times when the terrible object was not held in contemplation.

Nevertheless, there is a work peculiarly proper for the hour of death if it be so circumstanced as that any work can be done in it, recommendable as well to those who have, as those who have not done any good work before. The old proverb holds good here, better late than never: while there is life, I can scarce say there is hope, but there is a possibility, and who would not bestir himself in a matter of the utmost importance so long as there is a possibility that he may succeed? Some addicted to hard drinking have cured themselves of it by one strong resolution upon a sense of the danger it brought upon their health; others have got rid of a fond passion of love in like manner by a lively representation of the mischiefs attending it: many have been turned by an alarming distemper from a course of dissoluteness and indulgence, to sobriety, and regularity, never afterwards to be parted from; and the great St. Paul was converted from a persecutor to an apostle by a fright: if these persons had been called away immediately after their change, we cannot doubt but God would have numbered them among the righteous, and that he did so in one instance the trite example of the penitent thief is an evidence. Yet this possibility, which had better be treated with the contempt it deserves while we have length of time and fairer opportunities before us, that we may not be tempted to neglect them for such a slender dependence, can do no hurt by being magnified into a probable assurance to him, who is reduced to it alone: therefore it is rightly done by such as are called in upon these occasions to preach nothing but comfort and hope to the patient from such efforts as he is then able to make; not only for his present quiet, which is an object worth regard, but because it may spread a calmness and composure over his thoughts, which will give him the fuller and better use of them: and if he can be brought to suspend his terrors and feel an immediate satisfaction in the topics suggested to him, this may make him see the vanity of sensual pleasures or worldly pursuits and the desirableness of good sentiments, which will go a great way towards infusing them with the force of a habit, and effecting that thorough metanoia which is the one thing needful.

20. Nor need the last hour pass unemployed with those who have spent many preceding hours with a view to that their bodily pains and uneasi-

nesses, or if perhaps they have some mechanical tremors of mind they may consider as throes of the new birth introducing them into another world more commodious than this, and with a more agile better-constitutioned body, which whether they fancy it will be six feet high or the thousandth part of an inch it is no matter, so as it be a spiritual body making them almost purely rational creatures with very little of the sensitive, no more than can be well managed by the superior faculties. They will regard this as a last labour finishing the work they had to do here, and if there be any work to do hereafter it will be rendered easy and sure of success by what they have done here; for this life only is a state of probation, the next a state of certainty and uninterrupted progress towards perfection. They know that habits are strengthened by single acts, and the benefit they now find in the good sentiments they have been habituated to by their former conduct will encourage them to expect the like benefit in futurity from such acts of patience, tranquillity, resignation, and trust in the divine goodness, as they are able to exercise.

If they have been always taught to look upon the favours of Heaven as obtained by interest, it is not a time now to deal in argumentations, they must avail themselves of such ideas as they find in their possession; but they cannot have a better patron than their Redeemer, to whom they may resort directly without needing an introduction or other passport beside a sincere love of righteousness, and true cordiality for their fellow-members of his body, which he has made the sole conditions of his intercession. Or if they regard his mission and sacrifice as the sole necessary means leading mankind into that righteousness which will make them acceptable to the Father without any interest, and reflect that they attained what degree of righteousness they have by adherence to the doctrines, institutions, and instructions delivered from him, this will confirm their dependence on him for his further aid in their new state of Being: and the signal interpositions of God in his second and third persons to rescue the human race from the corruption of their nature, will be an earnest and experimental proof of his care over them throughout all the stages of their existence.

To which may be added another evidence springing from the contemplation of this world, for their openness of heart and well-wishing eye, quick at descrying prosperities and enjoyments everywhere, which must have discovered to them a copious flood of bounty poured on man and animal, reptile and insect, wherein themselves likewise have had a share, will have familiarized them to the expectation of a nature and course of events called fortune, together with divine interpositions if there be vacancies left requiring them in that part of the universal plan respecting other worlds, not less beneficent and gracious than those whereby sublunary affairs have been conducted.

These reflections inducing a serenity of mind and acquiescence in the summons whether given by the call of nature or of accident, they need not want employment in ruminating on such sound sentiments concerning the divine Attributes and government of Providence, as having been deeply inculcated by their former reasonings and a conduct conformable thereto are become firm persuasions or articles of Faith. To which may be added any little kind offices of charity which occur readily without solicitude, to hunt for them, and can be performed without much exertion. But I do not mean leaving legacies to pious uses, for this is not so much giving as compelling executors to give, but whatever may be profitable whether by way

of admonition or example to others who stay behind. For the solemnity of the scene makes every little object strike a strong impression, not presently to be defaced: so that a single word, a gesture, or composure of countenance of a dying person may do signal service to the by-standers, or others to whom they report it. And charity being the fulfilling both of law and gospel, the best ruling principle to guide the conduct of our lives, the only one of the three virtues which will bear us company into the other world, we cannot end our course in this, better than by an act of charity.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

CONCLUSION.

My labours are now drawn to an end, not by having exhausted my subjects, which perhaps were inexhaustible, but my stock of materials: and labours they have been to me, who, wanting that readiness of thought and expression which many people have at command, found great difficulty in collecting and digesting my matter, drawing out the threads of argumentation, preventing them from entangling, guarding against misapprehensions, and against giving occasion for inferences to be drawn from my words which I never intended. The women generally end their letters with, Excuse mistakes through haste; and many male authors affect to give you a hint, that they could have done better if they had a mind or would have allowed themselves more leisure: but I happen not to be of a humour to desire excuse for mistakes through haste; I had rather the reader should stand satisfied of my care and honest zeal in his service though at the expense of my abilities, and believe where he sees a blemish, that I should have done better, if I had known how. For of how little importance soever this attempt may prove, it seemed the most important I was qualified to undertake; and I have laid down all along that it is not so much the significancy of the part assigned, as the just and diligent performance of it that merits a plaudit.

Having this testimony of my own conscience, I may now make holiday with a quiet mind, and with the same joy as a workman upon having finished his task before the evening of his day is quite spent; but my pleasure is considerably abated by finding the performance fall short of the idea preconceived at entering upon it. Nevertheless, I may comfort myself with this being a common accident happening to thousands besides myself: the projects of ambition, the contrivances of avarice, almost all the schemes of life, whether in great designs or small, promise more than they perform, not only by rubs falling in the way, but when suffered to take their course they give greater expectation in the embryo, than satisfaction in their full maturity. And it is necessary they should do so, that the business of the world may go currently forward, for our indolence is so lumpish that it cannot be stirred unless by flattering hopes: we will not work for small wages and do not deserve great; therefore when Providence has any little service to put us upon, we are permitted to magnify it in our imagination, or else we should want ardour to exert ourselves; yet when the toil is over it is quickly forgotten, like the pains of a woman upon her delivery; and one may rest contented with a less favourable success than was necessary for urging one to undergo it. I now perceive by experience that my design re-

quired a more expert and masterly hand to execute, appearing as here managed rather a tissue of separate essays, than a neat, compact, and workmanlike composition, strengthened in all its parts by their mutual dependence and clear connection among one another; yet has it something of shape and a juncture between the principal members.

2. My aim in the first volume was to bring men acquainted with their own nature, the frame and texture of their composition consisting of a perceiving part, and a machinery of organs and instruments to serve its uses; to distinguish between secondary properties resulting from composition, and the primary belonging separately to the parts, which are the foundation of the other; for if one of the wheels in a watch were changed for a waxen wheel, the watch could not go; to observe that a compound can neither act nor receive action within itself unless by an operation of some one of the parts upon another, for in all action there must be a distinct agent and a patient; and to discern that the common transactions of life, each whereof we are obliged for convenience sake to esteem one entire action, are divisible into many little motions or acts succeeding one another instantaneously, one completed before the other begins.

The next inquiry runs upon the causes of action, with an endeavour to show, that the mind never stands indifferent to operate either in her great or small, her deliberate or sudden motions without some view, however transient, to prompt her; that this view always contains an idea of her own immediate satisfaction, under which term I take leave for brevity sake to comprehend the escape from uneasiness: but this naked satisfaction cannot be had alone without some sensation, or other pleasing idea to introduce it, which therefore as it occurs is the motive determining to every exercise of our activity.

It seemed then to follow in order, that we should search out the rise of our ideas from the two funds of sensation and reflection, how they unite into combinations and trains supplying us thereby with apprehensions, opinions, assents, and judgments. It appeared expedient likewise to distinguish the two faculties of imagination and understanding, the former the executive power, having for the most part the direction of our conduct, the latter the legislative, to be resorted to only upon great occasions, and serviceable chiefly for putting the other into proper trains: from whence it appears that we are sensitivo-rational creatures, having a larger mixture of the sensitive than the rational, more of the brute than the angel in our composition, and must learn to treat ourselves accordingly with discipline and honest artifice.

From this we pass on, perhaps a little immethodically, to the variety and generation of motives, touching upon the passions, affections, aversions, and habits which give most of them their currency and colour, and have their seat in the imagination. After this to bring the multitude of our motives into some distinguishable order we distribute them into four general classes, Pleasure, Use, Honour, and Necessity.

Having done for the present with imagination, we consider the faculty of reason, which must have some certain end to pursue: this proves to be the same as that which actuated the other faculty, with this only difference, that imagination with all her train of passions, appetites, and desires, catches always at the satisfaction of the present moment, whereas reason looks forward to all distances and all quarters to find the larger sum of satisfactions, or greater good that will result from her measures. Nevertheless, reason is too short-sighted to discern clearly or make just compu-

tation of all the consequences to follow upon the measures she has under deliberation, therefore must take some rule, the product of her former exercises or of other persons' experience and judgment, for her mark of direction; so that her ultimate end is very rarely her ultimate point of view, yet is it her business always to extend her view as far and wide as opportunity or the prospect lying before her will permit. But when she has fixed upon her point, whether ultimate or subordinate, it will avail nothing, imagination being the executive faculty, until she has raised an appetite or habit there, creating an immediate satisfaction in the prosecution, or uneasiness in deviating from it.

Hence spring the virtues, which are habits or turns of sentiment inclining spontaneously to such points of aim or courses of action as sober reason and sound judgment would recommend; and hence likewise it is dangerous to break the force of a virtue for sake of some apparant good, because greater good may be lost for want of this impulse at other times, when the line of expedience is not so apparent. This being the nature of the virtues, it is evident their foundation must stand upon Prudence, which is the habit of weighing distant good and expedience in a fair balance with present pleasure, or of being affected with remote satisfactions and evils, as strongly as with those that are nearer. The other cardinal virtues are only particular exercises of Prudence under the attacks of danger or pain, the allurements of pleasure, or temptations of self-love drawing us into a total disregard of our fellow-creatures: the last I have split into two, making a fifth cardinal of Benevolence, which seems naturally distinguishable from the obligations of Justice, for kindness does not begin till obligation ends.

Having collected these grounds, I thought it might be expedient to sketch out a plan of morality such as would lie thereupon, defective indeed, not in the main drift of the design, for it would be hard upon any hypothesis to assign an ultimate end beyond that of each man's own good, but in the scantiness of our limits, being confined only to the pleasures of this present life. But it was advisable to go through with the examination of human nature, and form something of a regular system out of the materials furnished by continual experience, before we proceeded to the consideration of futurity: because men are so attached to their own peculiar notions upon matters relative to futurity, that they will deny experience itself if they perceive it leading into a way they do not like. The safest course to escape the bad influence of prejudice, must be by first marshalling all the stores we can gather from experience in their proper order, that we may know where to find them again upon occasion, and then applying them to correct or serve for the basis of our speculative opinions.

And the observant reader will perceive in the sequel, that the subjects handled throughout these volumes are not the playthings of wanton curiosity, for I make frequent use of them afterwards, when coming to higher matters. But if he expects to profit by me, he must still make large use of his own understanding for putting the rude ill-joined materials presented him into neater order, shaping and polishing them in his own manner to have a coincidence with his ordinary trains, that they may lie ready and convenient for his service.

Nor will it be needful to familiarize his thoughts to the difference of primary and secondary qualities, the analyzation of action, the deliberate and transient motives, the two faculties of imagination and understanding, the ultimate end and ultimate point of view, and other minute but useful dis-

tinctions which I have called figuratively microscopic observations. For if these things are to be scrutinized over again every time application is made of them, the sequel in many places will appear dry, toilsome, and unintelligible, but with a readiness in them he will be able to judge easily and clearly what is or is not worth his reception afterwards.

3. The scope of my second volume tends to supply the deficiency left in the former by such researches as we are able to make into futurity, the first point whereof must be to inquire whether we are likely to have a continuance therein: and this depends upon our being compound or simple substances, for the laws of nature can only produce or destroy the former by bringing the materials of them together, or dissolving them again, but have no power over the latter, either to increase or diminish their number. In order to discuss this point, we are still obliged to employ the microscope for examining the nature of composition, which appears to be nothing else than a certain arrangement or juncture of substances, each having a distinct existence of its own before their coming together; so that a compound is no new existence, but a collection of things already existent though perhaps not discoverable by our senses; and upon the compound being destroyed, there is not a being lost, though perhaps the parts may be dispersed beyond reach of our observation. But neither can a collection or compound perceive without a distinct perception in all its constituent parts, for if some of them have a perception the others want, it is the parts and not the compound that perceives; so that perception must be a primary property, not a secondary resulting from composition. Therefore from the consciousness of our personality and existence, and from our perceptivity, may be inferred, that we are individuals or simple substances, not consisting of parts, nor destructible by all the powers of nature.

From the faculty of perceiving likewise it appears that we are not material substances, for it is of the essence of matter to be inert and stupid, nor would a grain of sand placed in the most exquisite organization perceive ever the more, therefore being incapable of receiving the notices brought to it from external objects: and this substance specifically different from matter is called spirit, which, wherever it shall fall, or of what compound soever it may become an ingredient, will still retain the same personality, and always continue to be our very selves.

Nevertheless, the discovery of our perpetual duration will avail us little without some further light into the manner how it may pass, whether in satisfaction or uneasiness, of both which we are capable. But here experience can give us no help, for we must expect to lose all intercourse with the objects from whence we receive our satisfactions, by losing our organs which were the channels through which they flowed; nor have we any experiment whereon to found a conjecture in what manner the floating particles of matter may affect us without organs. We must now therefore take the telescope in hand, as having distant objects and extensive prospects to behold, and must survey the face of nature lying visible before us, which experience testifies is a tissue of effects produced by a train of operations depending upon one another: this line we must investigate up to its original, which will quickly lead us to a God, the fountain of all powers, and intelligent disposer of all events we see around us.

Having found there is a God, the next step of inquiry tends to the knowledge of what he is, which we can only gather from contemplation of visible nature whereof we have experience, together with such conclusions

as we can draw from thence in our considerate judgment concerning the character and attributes of its Author. Of these attributes I first consider only the primary, postponing those I call secondary, as resulting from the nature of the creatures considered jointly with that of God, till a better opportunity. Perhaps I may be singular in having made an attribute of Equity which is commonly blended with that of Justice, but seems to me apparently distinguishable from it; the one making a difference between persons according to their deeds, the other void of all partiality, favour, or predilection, and no respecter of persons. And I should be glad the intelligent reader would examine this point thoroughly in his own mind before he goes on, because if I have made a mistake anywhere it is the most unlucky here, as being the corner-stone of my subsequent building. He may please to consider among all the causes that can incline to partiality or favour of one person above another, whether they must not proceed from some want or weakness which can have no place in the Almighty: and if he thinks an attribute of Equity most agreeable to his reason, he may suspend objections arising from the various distributions of fortune among mankind, and from Scripture, until he sees in the sequel how far I can bring them reconcilable therewith.

Yet I do not pretend to give this list of attributes for a complete analysis of the divine nature, for there must be other attributes besides, whereof we can have no imagination to account for the origin of evil, the limitation of goodness, and the effects of its being conveyed by the contrivances of wisdom, rather than the operations of power; for to our apprehension it seems that Omnipotence might have distributed what portion of good and evil was judged proper to the creatures by immediate acts, as well as by a long complicated tissue of second causes. But since the method of acting by the intervention of second causes has been constantly pursued so far as our experience and observation can reach, it may be presumed the divine conduct is uniform and of a piece throughout, and therefore that there is a plan of nature extending to the invisible world, whereof this of the visible is a part, the second causes employed in the one being calculated to produce effects in the other. And it being impossible for us certainly to investigate in what particular manner the causes at work here can effect our condition hereafter, or to know what scenes may pass with us then, there seemed no hurt in imagining a manner in order to render our general idea of being so affected less hard of conception: for as observed in the former volume, imagination is our strongest faculty, and the convictions of reason seldom have much weight or duration unless they can be represented in sensible images upon that. In this view I have ventured upon my two hypotheses of the Vehicles and the Mundane Soul carried on in the Vision, as a narrative of matters of fact, the better to illuminate my idea with visible colours. I am not conscious of those notions being hurtful to the substantials of Religion or doctrines of the Church; on the contrary, I have sometimes found a use for them in treating of those matters, and their being capable of this service, if it be not thought an evidence in their favour, may at least pass for my excuse in entertaining them.

From these speculations I proceed to the dominion of Providence extending to all events, comprehending every minute motion that may influence them, and leaving no room for chance to interfere. From hence may be gathered, that there is a plan of Nature and texture of second causes spreading over all the regions of the universe, yet not excluding immediate interpositions interwoven therein, to be exerted at predetermined times for

supplying of vacancies left on purpose for making them requisite. But difficulties being apt to start in this idea of Providence, as appearing subversive of liberty, it was necessary to enter into a minute discussion of this privilege in human nature, in order to show that a man is free when nothing hinders him from doing or choosing just as he pleases, notwithstanding the certainty of prior causes inclining him to choose or act in one particular manner, and to make it intelligible how Providence may govern the actions of men by having the sources of their inclinations, motives, and apprehensions at command, as well as by a compulsive force or authority.

I come now to make application of what we have been able to gather from our experience and meditations thereupon, concerning visible nature and the divine; from all which it appears, that as all matter is homogeneous, the same everywhere in solidity, mobility, and other primary properties, the difference of quality and operation in bodies resulting from their composition or arrangement of parts, and the action of other bodies upon them; so have we no colour of evidence to disprove that all created spirits are likewise homogeneous, possessed alike of perceptivity, activity, and other primary properties, their differences arising solely from the material organizations wherewith they are united, or the action of other substances affecting them and their secondary qualities, as also their perceptions varying according to changes made in the material composition, or in the substances whereamong they are conversant. But the laws respecting the formation of all compounds, and the particular operations of all substances, being comprised within the universal plan of Providence, whatever good any creature receives, whether procured by his own industry, or conveyed by the channels of nature or fortune, must derive originally from the divine bounty, with certain knowledge and direct intention that it should come to his hands.

Then taking into consideration the attribute of Equity, by which the distribution of bounty must be regulated, there will follow an exact equality upon the balance of good and evil allotted to every perceptive creature. Nevertheless, this equality in their whole portion is not inconsistent with inequalities in the present world, where they receive a very small part of it, but requires inequalities in some other part to compensate the differences made here. Nor can it be thought an improbable conclusion, that there is some immense period wherein the balance between all creatures, although greatly unequal for a time, shall be brought even at last. Hence follows a general connection of interests throughout the universe, a partnership in one common stock, which cannot be increased or diminished in any individual without proportionably affecting the share of every other: so that every hurt done by one creature to another hurts his own interests, as every good advances them, and every dispensation of Providence bringing damage upon individuals, must, to be consistent with our ideas of goodness and equity, terminate in some greater good of the creation, and therein of the party sustaining it.

I then examine into the secondary attribute of Justice, having its foundation in the short-sightedness of the creatures, and their insensibility to distant advantage needful enough for spurring them up to work in the attainment of good unseen, or too remote to touch their desire, by the nearer expectation of reward and punishment, which though distributed according to the conduct past, it is always with a view to their influence upon the future, and this influence they may sometimes have when brought upon one person by the deeds of another. From these observations it follows, that

punishment cannot be absolutely endless, which would violate Equity oy keeping the balance perpetually on one side; for since wickedness is permitted by Heaven, and it must needs be that offences come, undoubtedly for some necessary uses of the creation redounding from their punishment, there would be a partial withholding of bounty, unless the sufferer were to take his share in the benefit of those severe services he is permitted to go through.

This is the only point I am sensible of, whereat offence may be taken, as seeming contradictory to a received opinion; for which reason I would gladly have suppressed it, but could not, it being a principal link in the chain of reasoning, whereby the interests of our fellow creatures are connected with our own, from whence I conceive all the rules and duties of life may be derived. If I have erred, it has been in company with men of great note even in the Church, and hope to stand acquitted of having proceeded wantonly, with a disregard to consequences, by the pains taken to expatiate upon the intenseness of punishments to continue for a duration, whereof no man knows the bounds; which may well be styled an eternity in the language of the poor to whom the Gospel was preached. For though to God a thousand years are but as one day, to us they are an eternity, the utmost length of our view and our concern: and it were happy for us, if we never deemed a much shorter length expected to pass in the pleasures of this world an eternity, beyond which we need take no thought. The subtle speculations concerning the possibility of successive eternities to follow one another, if blameable, will show me too zealous rather than too indifferent in saving the credit of established tenets from being shaken by anything I have advanced.

Thus having shown in the first volume that each man's own satisfaction, interest, or happiness, is the primum mobile or the first spring of all his schemes and all his actions, as well rational as inconsiderate, and that the acquisition of moral prudence or the sensibility of enjoyment certainly to come at any distance of time equally with the present, is the sole and ready road to attain that purpose; having then in this volume deduced the connection of interests throughout the creation, whereby every individual becomes interested in the good or evil befalling anywhere: from these two premises follows the grand fundamental rule of conduct of labouring constantly to increase the common stock by any beneficial service or prevention of damage among our fellow-creatures wherever we can, preferring always the greater discoverable good and good of the greater number, before the less.

4. My design in the treatise on Theology was to bring our theory reconcileable to practice, in order whereto the great fundamental rule is first parted into two main branches, Prudence and Benevolence, commonly called our duty to ourselves and to our neighbour, the one directing to the care of our private interests, the other to those of our fellow-creatures with whom we have a visible intercourse: for we are members of the universe, therefore whatever we can do for ourselves without greater detriment to any other, is an increase of happiness upon the whole, and by preventing others from encroaching upon us, or forbearing to encroach upon them, we alike save the common stock from diminution.

But since to keep us steady in the exercise of these two branches it is necessary to inculcate just sentiments of the supreme Being, because it is by the knowledge of the Attributes alone that we can discover anything with assurance concerning things invisible, or trace the connection of interests, or discern any measures of conduct in this world conducive to the

improvement of our condition in the next; hence arises a third branch of the fundamental rule, our duty to God. For the foundation of this duty is not the obligation of serving God himself, of which we are utterly incapable, but because by so doing we serve ourselves, and one another most effectually. This duty is fulfilled by the best exercise of our rational faculties to form the soundest notions they are able to reach of his essence and manner of government, and then employing such expedients as the nature of our constitution requires to impress them deeply upon the imagination, that they may rise spontaneously in their genuine lively colours. But the understandings and imaginations of men being very various, it seemed a useful attempt to explain the distinction so much talked of among philosophers, between the esoteric and exoteric doctrines, and to show that they were not contradictory to each other, nor the one a concealment of treasures, or the other an imposition upon the vulgar, but both an expression of the same substance in different languages, accommodated to the difference of conception among mankind.

Here seemed the proper place to discourse on the three remaining secondary Attributes, namely, Purity, Majesty, and Holiness, which are rather of the exoteric kind, being not expressive of anything in the divine nature, but preservative of the idea of it in our hearts against the heterogeneous mixtures insinuating from the imperfections of man, for man being made after the image of God, it was natural to take our idea of him from his likeness; but then we must remember, there are many features in the image utterly unlike the original, and be careful to admit none of them into the composition.

The last of these subjects gave occasion for endeavouring to remove a scruple that might have arisen from our doctrine of universal Providence extending to all events, produced as well by man as by matter, and showing that God notwithstanding can in no propriety be styled the author of sin, nor do his provisions give a sanction or warrant to the commission, nor exempt it from being an act of disobedience nor from the punishment consequent thereupon. The Chapter on Providence having been mostly esoteric, scarce applicable to common use, it was needful here to resume the subject more in the other language, and show that although all events without exception were contained within the plan of Providence, nevertheless there is a profitable distinction to be made between those which are providential, and others which are not: this disquisition perhaps contains more striking evidences even of the being of a God, though not more solid than those produced in the beginning of this Volume: and some persons of good common sense who had the patience to hear my works only because they were mine, have declared that this was the first chapter wherein they found me intelligible.

5. Hitherto I have proceeded by the sole light of nature; I come now to compare the discoveries made thereby with those imparted to us from the religion wherein we were bred up, in order to find what there is of conformity between them, and with a desire of bringing them conformable in points where they have been thought to stand at variance; agreeably to my principal intention set forth in the general introduction of effecting a reconcilement between contending parties rather than taking side with either, to which design the observant reader may already have perceived a tendency at several times by occasional allusions and introduction of passages from the sacred text; but having now gotten together and prepared my materials, it is a proper time to enter directly upon the application.

The title Religion prefixed to the next chapter belongs rather as a running title to the whole remainder than to this particular chapter, which contains little more than an address to both parties, suggesting a presumption that if one would always strive to find a rational construction agreeable to our natural notions in the divine oracles, and the other would consider the facts of the evangelic history, though supposed to proceed from merely natural causes, as events extremely providential, having an extensive beneficial influence upon mankind, the result of both would terminate in a system of sentiment and conduct very little different in substantials: and exhorting them to deal with one another not as adversaries, but as persons in an amicable conference upon their common interests, for so the issue of their conference may justly be deemed, because, the general connection throughout the universe being borne in mind, whoever hurts himself hurts me, therefore if I think another in a wrong way I shall endeavour to bring him into the right by such methods as are likely to prevail with him, but if I cannot do that, I shall strive to turn his own opinions to his greatest advantage. But the work of reconcilement being a very nice business to manage, requiring a sober freedom and strict impartiality void of all bias or prejudice, it was needful enough for my own direction to examine what is true freedom of thought, and wherein it differs from bigotry on the one hand, and that called freethinking on the other; and to take warning against every danger that might threaten our liberty of judgment, whether from scrupulous fear, obstinate attachment to old notions, fondness for novelty, secret self-conceit, or the vanity of doing something extraordinary. This blemish of human nature creeping in some measure upon us all, extending its influence to all our motions as well momentous as trifling, deserved a particular discussion, the drift whereof was to ascertain the difference between true and false honour: for honour being the source both of the brightest virtues and most pernicious extravagancies, it was attempting a good service to settle it upon its proper foundation, which is the prospect of attaining things excellent in themselves, rather than that of excelling or surpassing other persons.

Armed with these cautions, I enter upon some of the doctrines of our religion; for I do not undertake to go through with them all, that would have been above my pitch, but what I have done may serve as a specimen of what is capable of being done this way, which may encourage abler hands more expert at the task to complete what I have left defective. But the reader must not expect to see me enter into the evidences proving the truth of those doctrines; this would have been a violation on my neutrality necessary to be adhered to in a scheme of reconcilement, because without it there can be no hopes of gaining a favourable attention from the opposite parties: it was my business only to examine how they are capable of being understood, and to seek for such expositions as they may easily receive without changing or wresting a single word in the forms delivered, as might be reconcileable with our knowledge of nature, with philosophy, and with the tenor of the foregoing work; nor have even my hypotheses been serviceable in some places for explaining my idea. And I have succeeded so far in my own apprehension, as that the chapter on things above and contrary to reason is become almost superfluous, having by turning the subject about in my thoughts brought some points to lie commodiously within the compass of my own reason, which I had thought inexplicable at the time of writing that chapter.

In touching upon the mysteries I shall wish to put myself upon the

judgment of persons who can see an honest intention though wrapped round in the mists of error; with others an inadvertent word upon such sacred subjects is deemed as the sin of blasphemy. I by no means desire to lessen their veneration for those subjects, but have offered reasons why a greater degree of sacredness is, and ought to be, sometimes annexed to outworks than to the substantials within; so that the sacredness of a tenet is no certain mark of its being an essential ingredient of the saving Faith. The having just sentiments of our Maker, of his goverment, of our dependence on him, and of the relation we stand in to one another as children of the same father, I take to be the essentials of natural Religion: submission to Christ, taking his word for the word of God, reliance on his institutions and assistance for conducting us into the former, or being persuaded that no man can come to the Father unless through the Son, I take to be the essentials of Christianity: all particular articles beside I humbly conceive to be no more than necessary outworks for protecting the substance, and therefore demand a sacred veneration in proportion to the danger that substance must be exposed to by abandoning them. But it is well known the rules of fortification vary in different ages, therefore some defences, which were indispensable formerly, may be safely slighted now, and of those which remain, the angles and breastworks may be new planned to accommodate them to the modern methods of attack, as carried on by the great Demetrius Poliorcetes the Freethinker, who batters not with the balistæ and catapultæ of old, drawn from the Fathers, the Councils, or the Mishna, but with cannon and musketry and even squibs of witticism, stolen and transmodified from the storehouse of Philosophy.

After the doctrines next in order follow the Virtues, comprised under three general heads, carrying a consistency with the cardinal virtues of philosophy. I have endeavoured to rescue Faith from the imputation of being no voluntary act of the mind, by explaining its nature upon the basis of our sensitivo-rational constitution, and showing that it is not assenting to certain propositions, but turning the convictions of our understanding into habitual, lively apprehensions of the imagination that constitutes it a virtue. If the province of Faith according to my representation be thought too comprehensive, as extending to the inclinations of the heart as well as the opinions of the mind, it may be considered that happiness in the prospect depends wholly upon opinion, and our desires follow our persuasions; for we take affection to things because we believe they will prove satisfactory in the possession, the pursuits of avarice, ambition, and all other schemes that engage us so eagerly proceed upon this foundation: therefore if a man could have a perfect knowledge and lively apprehension of everything conducive to his benefit, his desires would be rightly set, and the whole tenor of his conduct run in a right course by necessary consequence: for we all live by faith of some sort or other, though too often it is a rotten one: whence apparently it is a matter of the utmost importance to work our soundest conceptions into vigorous apprehensions, for till then they are not completely our own, nor will have an influence upon our practice.

Upon the article of Charity, which in vulgar estimation may be defined giving guineas to the Church and half-pence to beggars, I have strove to restore it to its rightful dominion, extending in wish and disposition, like the bounty of Heaven, to all created beings without respect of persons, but confined in its exercises by the scantiness of our powers to the degrees of

neighbourhood wherein they respectively are situated, even contentions and the hurts done to some having their foundation in Charity to others; and to show how there may be Charity towards God, although we stand in no capacity to do him any service or kindness.

Having gone thus far in this dispensation of God to mankind, whether you suppose it conveyed by his ordinary or extraordinary Providence, it appeared not unserviceable to take a fuller survey of the adminsitration of the moral world, and observe the share this had therein. In doing this I lay no stress upon prophecy and miracle, as being contested points unfit for the use of a neutral, but proceed upon historical facts notorious to everybody; from the course of which may be gathered, that there is a progress towards perfection of the human species, in general analogous to that of single persons through the stages of infancy, youth, and complete manhood, carried on by the workings of three great springs, Religion, Philosophy, and the science of common life, concurring by slow and imperceptible degrees, and sometimes with temporary retrogressions, to advance the grand design.

If I have touched upon the Millennium, it was not to dwell upon number sixes nor the precise term of one thousand years, nor the return to earth in gross bodies like our present; for these things are figurative, denoting a time of perfect righteousness, moral wisdom, and happiness, which whether it shall pass upon this terraqueous globe or among the Vehicles, it is no matter: but this kingdom of the just will be the kingdom of Christ or state of reward, as the absorption in the Mundane Soul, when he delivers up all dominion to the Father, will be the kingdom of God or state of undistinguishing bounty. From hence, besides the general connection of interests throughout the universe, there results a nearer connection among the human species, because none of the inheritors of the kingdom of the just can be completely happy, until all are so by their common nature being perfected; which yields an additional incitement to seize every little opportunity of contributing towards an advancement of the great work, and to prevent everything that appears likely to retard it.

It might have been thought a suspicious silence if I had said nothing of the rites and institutions of the Church; therefore I have taken some of them into consideration, still pursuing my plan of reconcilement between authority and reason; for I have proceeded upon a postulatum which I apprehend many very good and orthodox Christians will grant me, namely, that the commands of God are none of them arbitrary, but given for the benefit redundant therefrom to the receivers: and though it be no warrant for us to reject a command, because we see no benefit, for we ought to trust the wisdom of the giver that there is some which our short-sightedness will not permit us to discern, yet it is a commendable inquiry to search so far as we can into the manner wherein the benefit accrues, because it will help to discover the design of the command, and to perform it according to the spirit rather than the dead letter. This is what I have aimed at doing upon the articles taken in hand, endeavouring to explain how they may be rationally understood, what is their efficacy and manner of operation, and how they are calculated for our sensitivo-rational nature to bring imagination to act in the services of reason. If my explications have rendered them ess mysterious, I hope it will not lessen our reverence and attachment to find their uses made intelligible, and be shown they have a solid foundation in human nature, and the knowledge springing from experience.

The consideration of religious institutions being despatched so far as any

thing pertinent occurred upon the subject, there remained something to be added concerning the spirit and principle of religion in general, to rescue it from the extravagances fastened thereupon by some indiscretely righteous persons, with good intention I am willing to believe, but dangerous in the consequences, as tending to drive the weak into despair by setting them upon tasks far beyond their forces, and to draw them off from their duty to their neighbour and themselves, by a mistaken zeal in their duty to God. I have attempted to explain what is to be understood by doing all things for the divine Glory, showing first that it is speculatively possible, next how far it is practicable as men stand circumstanced, and lastly recommending some means for increasing in the practice of it. The principal difference between me and the persons just mentioned, lies in their employing so perpetually the motives of fear and obligation, which I would get rid of as fast as we can substitute a better principle in their room. I know the work must be begun by fear, and that there hangs an obligation upon us all to do our best, but if we can learn to fulfil our obligation without thought of its being one, I conceive we shall succeed better: nor are divine services completely acceptable until we can perform them upon inclination and persuasion of their being beneficial, without being dragged thereto by the reflection of their being duties.

From the topics of philosophy and religion I have descended to some practical subjects applicable to the conduct of life, which having been treated of more amply by many abler hands, I could not expect to add any thing material to what has been done by them, but was willing to show that my speculations may be turned to common use by deducing from, or correcting by them such rules and observations as may prove of general service: subjoining thereto a few thoughts relative to education and such methods for curing the fear of death, as in the pursuit of them may prove profitable to us while living, and yield us a benefit for ages after.

7. By this miniature of my performance, which, like a convex mirror, strengthens the colours and takes off the coarseness of objects by contracting them, or like the chart of a wilderness produces a discernible form by drawing all the mazes within compass of a single view, it may possibly be seen there is a uniform design pursued steadily throughout, a contexture of sinews and muscles deriving strength from their mutual dependence, and forming something of a regular body, yet disguised by the unskilful manner of putting the limbs together, and defective in point of symmetry or elegance of shape.

It is customary to give the reader his bill of fare before hand, but it was not in my power to gratify him herein, having not been able upon repeated trials to sketch out the lines of my design, so as to leave nothing more to do afterwards than fill up the colourings. Pursuits and inquiries are generally only descriptions of a route already preconcerted and travelled over by the author in his own mind, and this may be the most masterly way of proceeding for such as can take it; but my inquiry has been a real one even to myself, producing discoveries of tracks I was wholly unacquainted with at setting out, often not knowing what would be the subject of the next chapter until the preceding was ended, sometimes forced to rehandle my premises to fit them for a further application, and continually finding my materials grow out of one another. Perhaps it has happened never the worse, either for myself or my readers, that I could not do otherwise, having thereby escaped the influence of that prejudice mentioned above in the

second section; for when there is a scheme ready prepared, one lies under a temptation of misapprehending or undesignedly wresting facts in order to accommodate them cleverly thereto; and as few people are without their schemes, they will not look with an impartial eye upon anything offered to them which they foresee or suspect will contradict any part in that they have already adopted: besides that, when it is known beforehand what is to come, there arises an impatience of arriving at it too hastily without fully digesting the matters necessarily preparative thereto: therefore it is safest to examine the foundations first by themselves, without casting an eye upon anything else; and when they are well settled, then is the time to consider what superstructures may be raised thereon: nor is it always necessary that the superstructures should be novel, for we may find old ones that will stand firmly upon our groundwork after having a little smoothed their bottoms, and struck off the tottering stilts, upon which they had been awkwardly hoisted before. This is what I have all along been more desirous of doing, than of drawing conclusions entirely my own, having so much deference for the general opinions of mankind, as to presume them just, if they could be cleared from the misconstructions, colourings, and excrescences which make them appear to rest upon a false foundation.

8. For the manner of handling my subjects I shall need great allowances; and for those who are disposed to make none, I shall be best pleased if they should happen to disagree among themselves in the particular spots they condemn: for as I have had different persons in view, it was impossible to hit the taste of every one, it will be great luck if he finds something suiting it in places that others dislike. Some may think me too light and others too profound, or perhaps find me guilty of both extremes at different times: but they will please to distinguish when the obscurity is unavoidable, as arising from the nature of the subject, and when owing to unskilful management, charging the latter only to my account; and may ascribe the levities and singularities of thought to a desire of enlivening abstruse matters, and rendering them visible by familiar images, not always chosen by the courtly standard, for want of perfect acquaintance with modern delicacy.

For I live a good deal retired within myself, little conversant with political or other performances of general currency among my compatriots, so perhaps have taken too strong a tincture from the exceptionable parts in the ancients, among whom I find Plato mingling low humour and coarse objects among the most serious subjects, and Homer comparing Ajax to an ass drubbed by boys, Agamemnon to a bull, and making Helen call herself impudent bitch, which may have led me to transgress the modern rules of elegance and decorum, though I hope in no instance so grossly as the last-cited example. Repetitions and misplacings I fear there are several, for being more solicitous for the substance than the form, if any clearer explanation or further application occurred than had been made before, it seemed more pardonable to resume an article already despatched, than omit anything material, or lose a use it was capable of being turned to.

If propriety of diction and harmony of composition have suffered in many places, or the period has like a wounded snake dragged its slow length along, it has not been through inattention but an unwillingness to curtail the sense for the sake of measure; and though Horace directs to send back the ill-turned line to the anvil, I have found the first working too laborious to leave me strength for a second hammering, yet I may probably go through a slight revisal to retouch some few parts where it is most wanted. I have endeavoured to be industrious but not profound

thinking it a less fault for the horse to be a little too mettlesome than jadish: therefore, after carefully considering my substance, have chosen to follow impulse rather than rule in the disposition and clothing, yet keeping the rein in my hands to check it upon occasion for which my own word must necessarily be taken, because nobody else can know in what instances I have restrained its scamperings. And I have generally observed that productions which were more the growth of nature than of art, have been better received than those which proceeded with a scrupulous unvaried exactness; for men have such an indolence of temper, they want something continually to awaken it, and will easily pardon negligences springing from a close attention to that view. Nor may these prove unserviceable to attract the notice of such as have quicker eyes and better memories for a blemish than a beauty, because while busy in picking out the chaff, they may chance to find clinging thereto a few grains of sound corn, which they would otherwise never have meddled with.

9. Mankind has been usually distributed into two general classes, heretofore called the adept and the vulgar, but I would rather entitle them the contemplative and the active: because the word vulgar is now become an expression of arrogance and contempt, though formerly innocent, having no relation to lowness of rank or want of natural capacity, but only of that particular expertness gained by assiduous application of the mental faculties.

These two classes must be addressed in two different languages, the esoteric and the exoteric; but there being a variety of gradations between, requires an equal variety of mixtures of the two languages to accommodate them to every one's taste, so that you cannot talk to a man satisfactorily, till you know what portion he has of the contemplative and of the popular in his composition, which you must find out as well as you can; for if he would tell you, he cannot, never knowing himself how much there is of the latter. This variance of languages has laid me under considerable difficulties, requiring all the caution I could muster up, as well as all the freedom needful to maintain the cause of truth: for being desirous of attempting something for the benefit of both classes, it was unavoidable that I must appear unintelligible to some, and hazard the scandalizing of others: which I know no way to prevent unless each person will be so kind as to suppose whatever he dislikes was intended for other people, without a thought of perplexing or offending him.

But it may be perceived that my principal view, especially in the former parts has lain towards the intelligent, whom I would not presume to instruct, but only to offer hints which may save them some trouble in making discoveries for themselves. Revelation indeed has begun with the vulgar, for the Gospel was preached to the poor, and we all know how the knowledge imparted by it has passed through the channels of superstition and monkish ignorance to the heights we now are blessed with. But this is one of the intricate ways of Providence explorable only by the all-seeing eye, which purblind man must not pretend to imitate; human reason can only apply to reason, and if her votaries by carefully contributing their lights can come to a conformity upon any material article, they will want neither skill nor authority to draw the rest of the world after them.

The fundamental article I have aimed at establishing is that of universal charity, unreserved benevolence or public spirit, not confined to our own country alone, but extended to every member of the universe, whereof we all are citizens; these terms are in every-body's mouth, and the principle of action expressed by them meets with every body's applause, probably be-

cause the excellence of it is so generally acknowledged they are ashamed to appear singular; for it gains the full assent of their understanding, yet perhaps without an intimate persuasion in the sensitive faculty of its real value. This persuasion can only be worked in the persons I am now speaking of by clear deductions of reason, evincing that the good done to another is an advantage secured to the doer; for it must be owned that each man's own happiness is the true original spring and proper first mover of all his actions, so that the profit of others can have no solid weight with him in his contemplative moods, until shown conducive to that, or at least must have an irresistible weight when once so manifested.

Therefore I would entreat him to examine well the several links of the chain whereby this deduction has been attempted: the nature of man constantly actuated by motives either of judgment, inclination, or fancy, void of all free-will of indifference giving a preference to things which had none in his apprehension before, yet having a freedom of action and choice to execute what in his present idea appears eligible, the individuality of his perceptive part rendering it indestructable by all natural powers, the insufficiency of chance and nature for first causes, the divine Omniscience, the universal plan of Providence, comprehending all things as well general as particular, the derivation of good from the divine Bounty, the Attribute of Equity concerned in the distribution thereof, from whence follows an exact equality of fortune computed upon balance of the whole, however unequal in the several parts, and consequently an universal partnership wherein every profit accrues to the benefit of the whole and of every component member; which brings home the interests of his fellow-creatures to himself. To which may be added as a corollary, that the more general interest and the greater good always deserves preference before the less, nor ought to be lost for fear of bringing a damage upon one which will be over-compensated by its produce to the party sustaining it, or to others: and that every benefit or even present gratification and pleasure procured for any individual, not excepting himself, if unattended with bad consequences, is a profit made to the whole.

10. Yet the necessity we lie under many times in the commerce of the world to punish, to hurt, to thwart, and contend with one another, and to maintain our private interests in disregard or opposition to those of our neighbour, is apt to loosen our attachment to the general good; making it appear impracticable and romantic, because finding ourselves perpetually driven into measures seeming contrary thereto. But when we consider how much the world would be the worse for a total omission of those measures, for every one proceeding by a softness and milkiness of temper, untouched by injuries, unmoved at offences, unconcerned for his private interests, we shall be convinced that the practice of them is no deviation from our principal aim, the good of the whole. But since it is the nicest point in all the science of morality to distinguish how far the impulses of affection, resentment, and self-interest coincide with the public good, and when they endamage it, we shall do well to trace our references thereto continually with our best skill and discernment, examining the tendency of our conduct, not only in its immediate consequences, but likewise in the influence it may have by example and sympathy upon the by-standers. By frequent custom of doing this, we may gradually bring our common aims to become lines in the scheme conducting into our principle, shall have a warrant therefrom to quiet our consciences in the prosecution of them, and having thus accommodated it to daily use, shall never need to swerve from it; whence will

grow such an habitual attachment, as will readily restrain any desire or impulse that urges apparently to a departure from our plan.

It cannot be expected that men in busy life, how good soever their talents may be, but having other duties to employ them in, should find leisure or gain expertness enough to trace their references fully, and bring all their measures of conduct into an uniform system dependent throughout upon the ultimate end, but must proceed occasionally upon particular views, and maxims, whereof they do not see distinctly the foundation. For though imbibed from custom, they appear to need no foundation, being self-supported by an inherent certainty, the strangeness with which any doubt raised against them sounds in the ear giving them a character of self-evident truths. These principles then respecting not only Religion but morality, natural philosophy, politics, politeness, private prudence, and all the measures of conduct, some whereof pass for self-evident truths in one country and with one man, but for self-evident falsehoods and palpable absurdities in another country or with other men, are nevertheless the materials to be employed in rendering theory practicable. Therefore if any man thinks he has pursued his science to the lowest foundations of experience and reason, and formed his own speculative plan thereupon, let him next consider, how far it is practicable to bring others to co-operate therewith; for which purpose he must give attention to the opinions, desires, and ways of thinking prevailing among them, endeavouring to discover wherein he can contribute, be it ever so little, towards correcting or turning them to the general advantage.

But this advantage requiring abilities as well as right disposition to promote it, (for a man of great talents but very slight regard for his fellow-creatures may do more service to the public than another with the most upright intentions but little capacity,) he will concur in encouraging those propensities which urge men to improve and exercise their powers; for it is better they should do good undesignedly, or upon private views, than not to do it at all. Nor will he strive indiscreetly to eradicate all fond desires, if they be needful to counterbalance others more pernicious: for he will bear his ultimate end constantly in view, weigh in all his measures what profit will accrue upon their whole consequences, and proceed with a judicious moral policy and sometimes practise honest artifice. But the better to succeed herein he cannot be too careful to clear himself from every fibre of that evil weed the desire of excelling, which would unavoidably make him conceited, opinionative, and selfish, fond of things new and extraordinary, negligent of small services, aspiring to be the leader of a sect, and more solicitous to maintain a point than discover a use to be drawn from his observations. Nevertheless, if the whole reason of things together with all its connections cannot be laid open to the busy, yet they might be led into a compendium of it containing the principal links; some whereof, such as the Being of a God, the creation of substances, the superintendency of Providence, the spirituality and unperishableness of the soul, are now become popular tenets, though in ancient days the subject of disputes and philosophical inquiries.

And a general humanity and benevolence of mind is so far a popular doctrine too, as that nobody will deny its obligation and commendableness, yet I fear without an intimate persuasion of the truth they acknowledge with their mouths, owing I presume to the injudicious practice of teaching Religion and morality as a distinct science from that of common life, which is indeed a branch of the other, and deserves a diligent endeavour to ex-

plain in what manner it grows therefrom. For he that takes a proper care of his private interests, and a proper notice of injuries or offences, acts therein for the public good, because it is better for the world that men in general should do so, than that they should omit it. For though the interests of our greater Aion, commonly called the bliss of Heaven, be deservedly the ultimate aim of all our schemes, yet we cannot discover either by anatomy, or politics, or natural philosophy, or any other human science, by what methods to attain it; but the temporal happiness of our fellow-creatures, or the greater good resulting to one or more of them from our actions, is the mark which God has given us as well by his light of nature as of Revelation, for our sure direction thereto. Therefore if men of thought would join the knowledge of the world to their abstract science, and observe what reference the common transactions and even amusements of life may bear to the general good, they might remove that objection against the possibility of acting steadily upon this motive, which starts up in people's minds when they cry we must take a prudent care of ourselves, we must sometimes contradict, oppose, do hurt, and displeasure to one another: for they might show that whenever those things must be done, they tend to increase the common stock of happiness, and whenever they have apparently a contrary tendency, there is no must in the case, but they may and ought to be forborne.

I do not suppose the whole line of this tendency can be made visible to every common eye, but the principal parts might, and the connection wanting between would be supplied by the authority of the persons tracing it, if unanimous in their drawings, so that a principle of universal charity would be generally esteemed the highest prudence, which, as I have several times said before, must in time restore a paradise upon earth: mistakes might be made at first, but experience and the mutual endeavours of all to assist each other in improving upon it, would correct them. It would be too sanguine to hope this can ever take effect completely while the present sublunary form of human nature continues, yet this is the point whereto all our aims ought to be directed with discretion, and calm perseverance rather than eager zeal; the more hands concur in the work, the quicker advances will be made, and every little approach will yield its proportionable advantage.

For the business of life seems to lie in extending and enlarging our views: while children, we care only for ourselves and the present minute, in a little time our concern reaches to the next hour, or the next day and to the persons about us: in youth we look forward to the pleasures of some years before us, and take part in the successes of our friends or acquaintance: when arrived at full manhood, we deem ourselves in some shape or other public persons, and entertain prospects of family, fortune, or fame; but these are still delusive or narrow views, nor is the heart opened to its just dimensions unless by an universal charity, prompting to every service of our fellow-creatures that opportunity shall make practicable, whereby to secure to us and them a happy establishment for ages to come.

11. But though I have had the speculative chiefly in mine eye, my view has not been to them alone, but besides the efforts towards forming a regular system for their accommodation, I have endeavoured to lay open the sensitivo-rational constitution of human nature, by the study of which they may learn to apply their knowledge to the service of such as want either capacity or leisure to make the full use of their own reason; and have given specimens of the manner wherein some of the popular doctrines may

be founded, explained, and enforced upon our theory. For it seems too narrow a vulgarity in those who value themselves upon being raised above the vulgar, to despise every old woman that thrums over good books all day, and groans for her sins, because she does not understand Latin, and has no interest in the county: my notion is apparent enough by this time concerning the intrinsic equality of the spiritual individuals, their differences proceeding from the structure, and fitting up of the habitation wherein they are lodged, therefore I can regard none of my fellow-creatures as below my notice. Perhaps the learned reader will take this oddity, if he thinks it one, as an excuse for some sections up and down which were designed for the old lady: as I hope the latter will admit the like excuse upon the merit of those sections for what she finds strange and latitudinarian elsewhere, believing me a well-intentioned body, but a little bewildered by dealing too much among heathen authors.

But one must run hazards of disgusting some in endeavouring to accommodate others; for all expect to have their own occasions solely consulted, and whoever does otherwise they censure, the wise pronouncing him a weak, and the simple a bad man. This danger was unavoidable in the prosecution of my design, for I wanted to bring both classes to be more sociable and mutually helpful to one another, by making the one a little more sympathizing, and the other a little more rational. My apprehensions of blame are greatest from the latter class, as abounding more in absolute certainty and self-evident truths, and consequently of a less forgiving temper, because every questioning of a self-evident truth can proceed from nothing but wilful wickedness: and I know not whether they may not be known by this characteristic, or whether how well soever a man may understand Latin and Greek, or how deeply soever be read in Collin's Heraldry, or the Parliamentary Journals, yet if he be positive in his conceptions, and look with a contemptuous strangeness upon everything that does not exactly tally with them, this ought not to be taken as a sure mark that the sensitive part is predominant over the rational in his composition.

But though desirous of keeping upon good terms with every body, I am less solicitous of the two to save my own credit than to avoid doing real hurt to any: I have used all the caution in my power when handling of ticklish subjects, and if I have transgressed the bounds of discretion in some material point, the candid reader may please to know that my conversation for some years past has fallen among persons who had other ways of employing their thoughts than those I have travelled, so was forced to break through the briers of abstraction by myself, without company or assistance on my journey; therefore he will consider me as inopem consilii, destitute of advice, and grant me the same indulgence which the law-courts upon the like consideration allow to a will, wherein they endeavour to discover the testator's intentions, without insisting upon a legal nicety of form or expression: so he will judge upon the spirit rather than the letter, and upon the line of view followed upon every particular occasion, than accidental slips made for want of better eyes or seasonable admonitions.

I wished to have imparted my thoughts to different persons separately, but this was impossible in a written treatise where the reader chooses his book, not the author his readers. I should then have paid a due respect to the self-evident truths which some discern by the eye of faith, and others by the moral sense, which two organs sometimes discover absolute certainties contradictory to each other. The former may take scandal at my ascribing too much to nature, as derogating from the divine dominion, and

the latter at my supporting the credibility of immediate interpositions, as implying a want of skill in the Maker to construct his work perfect without needing to be perpetually rectified by his own hand. But my idea of nature is not that of a distinct independent agent or power, but a tissue of second causes set at work by God with certain foreknowledge and intention of every minute effect they should produce: therefore I cannot be charged with impiety for attributing too largely to nature, or even supposing the rewards and punishments of another life effected by natural causes, because by giving to nature I take nothing from God, every operation she performs being his act, as truly as if done by a direct exertion of his omnipotence.

And if there have been immediate interpositions among mankind, I do not conceive them employed for correction of defects or oversights in the original plan, but interwoven thereinto on the first formation, for manifestation of the divine agency to the creatures, lest by constant attention to nature alone, they should forget there was a superior power establishing her laws, and giving the first motion to all her courses. So likewise if there be a written word, my conceptions of the Almighty represent him as consistent and uniform throughout in all his dispensations, therefore his word cannot be new laws repealing any of those promulgated by the voice of Reason, but contains only suggestions leading to the discovery of secrets in nature we should never have hit upon without that aid; which when traced down to their foundations become parts of our natural philosophy, taking that science in its largest latitude extending beyond what is styled physiology, to the laws of nature respecting the invisible world, of which we can have no other knowledge than what can be gathered from contemplation of the character, and observation upon the ways of their founder.

12. The generality of mankind, how acute soever their optics may be, rarely have them set either for microscopic or telescopic observations, their necessary commerce in the world confining them within certain dimensions convenient for common use, beyond which compass they can see no objects greater or smaller than the familiar sizes. This gives a strangeness to all discourse upon a plan of universal nature, a series of causes running immeasurable lengths, the connection of interests, the foundation of justice upon expedience, and an equality worked by the balance between a diversity of states in some immense period: as on the other hand it creates a difficulty of analyzing the component parts of compounds, of action and operation, which are apprehended in the gross, of discerning the latent and sudden motives necessary to be known for a thorough insight into human nature, and noting the variations of language according to the several occasions whereon it is used.

Hence spring the difficulties upon free-will and the dominion of Providence, the self-moving powers of nature, the idea of chance as an agent, the propensity for having recourse to Omnipotence without intervention of second causes, the intrinsic goodness of rectitude and virtue without relation to consequences, and confused notion of the soul as being purely spiritual yet possessing powers which cannot subsist without material instruments. Hence likewise the diversity of dialects distinguishing them into esoteric and exoteric, wherein several words carry different and sometimes opposite senses, such as pleasure, interest, substance, person, individual, divine agency, Providence, besides many others: so that the same expression may contain sound orthodoxy in one person's apprehension, and greatly scandalize others, and this not by any real variance in their opinions, but from their variously understanding the terms wherein it is couched. Thus

follow pleasure, and consult your own interest, are fundamental rules in the esoteric code whereon all the obligations of religion, morality, and discretion are primarily supported, but would be extremely fatal to such as speak only the vulgar tongue, because with them pleasure and interest are two great deceivers we must warn men against, as continually leading them astray: for those terms in the former case denote the whole sum of satisfactions consequent upon a measure under our option, in the latter they signify the present gratification of some desire starting uppermost in the fancy.

So likewise it is a maxim holding invariably true, that the end sanctifies the means; but then this is to be understood only of the ultimate end when clearly discerned, and the road thereto apparent beyond all hazard of a mistake: yet it would make wild work among the generality, who act always under subordinate ends, many times palmed upon them without their knowing it by some secret passion, if they were allowed to pursue their end by any means whatever, good or bad. For this reason I am a little in pain about inconveniences from my doctrine of the Vehicles and Mundane Soul; for though I do not know that those hypotheses tend to invalidate any one article of religion or morality, not even the eternity of punishment, understanding that term by the popular idiom, yet there is a hazard that some folks, capable of apprehending nothing unless by sensible images, if once persuaded the room is full of mundane spirits with some departed souls intermixed, may take it into their heads to fancy they see them whisk to and fro, or feel them in their insides, or hear them buzzing about their ears, or perceive some operation performed by them; but I must desire such people not to charge their superstitious notions at my door; for in my idea of spiritual substances they are not the object of any sense, and though I have supposed them concerned as first movers in the operations of matter, they act therein as instruments in steady conformity to the will of God, with clear understanding of his great and gracious design, and the propriety of their several parts for carrying on the courses of nature marked out in his plan of Providence, nor are they liable to any of those vagaries or irregularities too continually practised by ourselves. And for the Vehicular gentry, if we have any of them in our company, their minuteness is such that we can have no intercourse with them whatever, nor see them with all our straining any more than we can the corpuscles of air, whereof nevertheless we know the room is full.

It was lucky I happened to escape the notion of pre-existence; for though I have shown upon several occasions how that whimsy may be turned to excellent advantages, yet it might have set some fanciful people a-dreaming, that they conversed with the unborn in their sleep, or had scenes renewed of occurrences passing with them in a former state, or perhaps they might have given into the only foible remaining upon record of Socrates, who imagined that when a man, after poring over a mathematical demonstration, happens at once to discern the force of it, this was a reminiscence or recollection of a truth familiarly known to him a hundred years before; just as if you had an intimate friend gone to the East Indies, and after twenty years absence you see somebody you think you have seen before, but do not know where, till upon examining his features carefully you feel a sudden joy upon recollecting it is your old acquaintance.

But the scientific system in general is by no means convenient for common use; it serves only to rectify the ordinary rules whereby we must act, to restrain their extravagances, to determine between their variances where they appear to clash, and to prevent their being misapprehended or mis-

applied. For how can the artisan, how can the man of business, deduce his measures of conduct from the general good of the universe, first parting it into two principal branches, prudence and benevolence, and from thence drawing out the particular twigs suitable to his own occasions? or how tell in what manner his contentions and caution in bargains are conducive thereto? therefore he must follow the duties of his profession, and maxims of private prudence or self-defence, as first principles. And he may answer the end of his vocation thereby, as well as men of deeper penetration: for the purpose for which our span of life was given us, as observed above, seems to be for strengthening the judgment by exerting it in opposition to appetite; therefore not he who has the most piercing judgment, but he who makes the best use of such judgment as he has, is the better man; but strength is gained more by the struggle than by the victory, for when opposition ceases, judgment grows into an appetite, and we act under it by habit or impulse without aid of the rational faculties: therefore whoever adheres steadily to any rules which have the approbation of his judgment upon the best evidences he can obtain, performs his part completely so far as relates to his own merit in the execution.

But since there are various offices among mankind contributing to the service of the whole, various talents distributed, and stations assigned respectively suitable thereto, some being qualified to examine the propriety and general expedience of measures which others can only execute, the former ought to consider themselves as persons placed upon a promontory for sake of others, not as a peculiar privilege to themselves, to make signals to their fellows below, warning them against deviations from what they discern to be the proper ultimate point of pursuit: not striving to force attention with a dictative authority, but choosing rather to proceed by ways of friendly admonition and gentle persuasion, adapted to the character of those on whom they would prevail.

13. I have taken pains to suggest plans of observation to my brother sentinels for the better execution of their office, and have not been wholly negligent to take my part among them, by giving notices to such of the travellers below, as are willing to receive them: but those pains have cost me so many weary hours, they seem to need an apology with the world for undergoing such drudgery. For amusement is so much thought the sole business and obligation of one who is not driven from it by necessity, or the duties of a profession, that all voluntary labour, or abridging one's self of diversions in one's power, appears an oddity and strangeness, and by that mark must needs be self-evidently wrong.

Yet I think there is one exception against this rule in the case of self-interest: a man may constrain himself in his pleasures for the sake of raising an immense fortune, or getting a place among the ministry, or a title, or for establishing an influence in the country, without imputation of folly or being thought a strange creature. This exception I may claim the benefit of, being in principle one of the most selfish mortals upon earth: not but that to my shame it must be owned, I daily swerve in my conduct from this unerring guide, but then it is upon being taken by surprise, obscured by the darkness of my optics, hurried by some impetuous or beguiled by some sly passion, or driven by the torrent of the world; but in my contemplative moods, when having the best use of my understanding, self lies at the bottom of all my schemes; and this work being the produce of my considerate tranquil hours, it may be admitted, that I was actuated all along therein by the same laudable motive. But it will be asked what pri-

vate advantage I can propose by taking a course which lies neither in the road to profit, nor honours, nor popularity, nor can be expected to draw notice enough for gaining an empty reputation. These objects indeed I had not in prospect, not even the last of them, for the world admire what they love, and love what gratifies their humours, not what aims at correcting them: coincidence with a popular passion will make a single line of half-starved spiders fed on half-starved flies, outshine all the sublime of Homer and Milton, and obtain a currency almost equal with the Bible; but though I have ranked compliance among the virtues, I am unluckily ill qualified for a servile compliance either with court or common council. Besides, supposing the most that can be supposed, performances of the kind I present, if they make their way in the world at all, do it by very slow degrees, being first regarded only by a few, until by them recommended to public notice; so that I cannot hope to reap a benefit therefrom, for a few years will enrol me among the Vehicles, where, if I should know any thing of what passes here below, I should probably retain as little relish for the trumpet of earthly fame, as I do now for the applauses bestowed in my childhood upon having made a pretty bow, or repeated currently the fable of the frog and mouse.

Nevertheless, I have already in part reaped some benefit from my labours, having thereby cast my thoughts into a more regular train affording light, wanted before in some points as well of speculation as of daily use, thereby rendering my conduct a little more consistent and satisfactory. Could I conform my practice completely to my own doctrines, and turn all my convictions into habitual lively persuasions of the sensitive faculty, I should be a clever fellow and a happy man: but of this I fall greatly deficient, yet this very failure is not without its benefit, as helping to check that noxious weed the desire of excelling, by making me fully sensible how little ground of encouragement there is for expecting to succeed in such a desire. For self-conceit grows most copiously out of ignorance, as heath and brakes do from barren sands: the better a man becomes acquainted with what is real excellence, the more he will be mortified on finding how far he falls short of it; and he will sometimes discover those very sentiments and proceedings to be weakness, which otherwise he would have been extremely proud of.

Yet if anybody else can make a better use to his own emolument of the lights here struck out, he is heartily welcome: I do not mean this as a compliment, nor to beg an applause of uncommon disinterestedness; for to confess the honest truth, I am so thoroughly selfish, that I should hardly concern myself much with what happens to other folks, if I did not think my own interests involved with theirs. For I have taken so much tincture from my speculations, as to stand persuaded of the general connexion and partnership throughout the Universe: so that by playing a beneficial branch of trade into a partner's hands, I serve myself, and whatever good is procured for a fellow-creature will redound upon the author; either in the exoteric language, by reward annexed to the declaration of that sentence, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me; or in the esoteric, by provisions already made in the laws of universal Nature, working the same effect through a chain of consequences uninvestigable by human science.

14. Perhaps it will be asked again, What considerable progress I expect to make in the reformation of mankind with all my toiling; for people will not easily pardon you for taking great pains without great prospects;

and this humour of the world seems to be figured in the parable of the talents, where it was the one talent only that was abused; for we may suppose the possessor of it argued with himself in this manner, Had I been entrusted with five talents there would had been good encouragement to have aimed at obtaining the government of five cities, but it is not worth while to plod with a single talent, for sake of the slender profit that may be made of it by the best management.

But my idea of industry has been seen, wherein its genuine characteristic appears to be attentiveness to small profits in default of opportunity or powers for greater; so I am not solicitous to measure the size of my talent, nor find out important services to employ it in, but to turn it to the best advantage it is capable of. I am not gifted to serve my country in the cabinet or senate, nor to declaim in prose or verse for the cause of liberty without understanding or well considering what liberty is, and am of too timid a constitution to address my sovereign with professions of inviolable loyalty, but upon proviso that he will employ such ministers as I shall like: therefore to how little purpose soever I have bestirred myself, I know of no other way wherein I could have attempted a better. And I seem the fitter for proceeding in this way by my situation in life subjecting me to no prior engagements, which renders the passage more expedite and open to me than to the clergy, within whose province it might be thought properly to lie: for besides that they are suspected by many persons in all they say as coming from parties interested, from advocates retained to support a cause rather than friendly monitors or impartial inquirers, they are likewise a little confined in their motions by the necessary regard to their profession and character; for the same truths are and ought no more to be spoken by all men, than to all men; there is a respect due to the audience, and a decency to be observed that nothing may be let slip unbecoming one's station. This I conceive still restrains them a little in their freedom, notwithstanding that of late days they make frequent excursions, so far as that commendable regard to decency and discretion will permit, in the way of rational explanation, the same I have attempted to travel: to instance particularly in one article, that upon the operation and efficacy of prayer, there seems to be some strokes of similitude between my chapter and the treatise of Archdeacon Stebbing upon that subject; and I flatter myself the resemblance would have been greater, if either he had addressed to the studious, or I been to write for the better sort in a country parish.

With respect to my own expectations of success from my labours, I do not look for much notice to be taken of them, nor much service to be done by them directly, for want of a facility in expressing my trains of ideas with clearness, which perhaps may be further obscured by the desire of gratifying that general fondness for amusement, mentioned above: for one is apt to judge of the rest of the world by the little circle of one's own acquaintance; and though they perpetually recommend books to my perusal, I never hear them do it because the book is instructive, but because entertaining, nor do they tell me the author has handled his subject with solidity and judgment, but with spirit and smartness: so this idea of obligation to aim at liveliness may sometimes have overwhelmed the substance; for though I have endeavoured all along to be serious without being solemn, and to keep something solid in view even when appearing most familiar and playful, this stratagem may fail of taking effect; because some, like children to whom you give a pill wrapped up in a raisin, will suck the plum and spit out the medicine, while the indignation of others will rise

on seeing themselves treated like children, by going to tempt them with sugar plums.

Yet how little benefit soever I can hope to do myself, it is not impossible but this imperfect attempt may put somebody or other upon the like method to erect a system of Religion upon the foundation of human nature, and such knowledge of our Maker as can be gathered from contemplation of the world around us, taking directions from the Sacred Writings in what lines of bearing to pursue his inquiries: and as Falstaff valued himself upon the cause of wit in other men, so if my rude sketches should occasion some completer production which may gain general currency and do signal service among mankind when Search and his embryo work are clean forgotten, I may still take credit for it in my own account. For had I been able to do the like, those to whom I was obliged for my education, or by whose works I have profited, would have been entitled to their share in the produce; and whoever is remotely instrumental to a good purpose, though achieved by other hands, promotes his own interests therein. Therefore I shall conclude with a wish well becoming a selfish person, which is, that this in any manner may prove wholesome bread, which I cast upon the waters, for I do not fear to find it again after many days.

THE END.

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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Dr. Geetha Ravikumar
on 02 April, 2019